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M.D., D.C.L., LL.D.

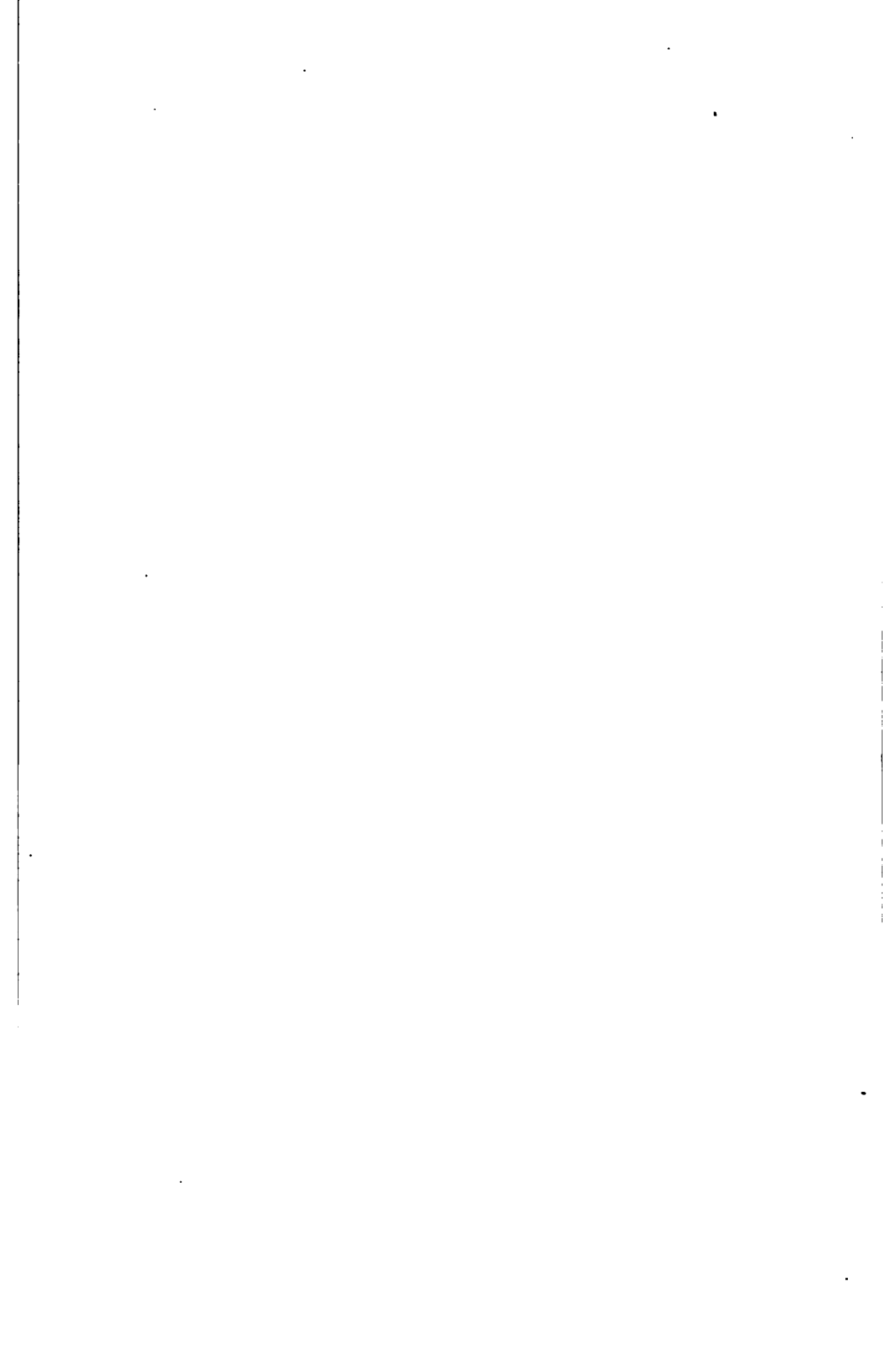
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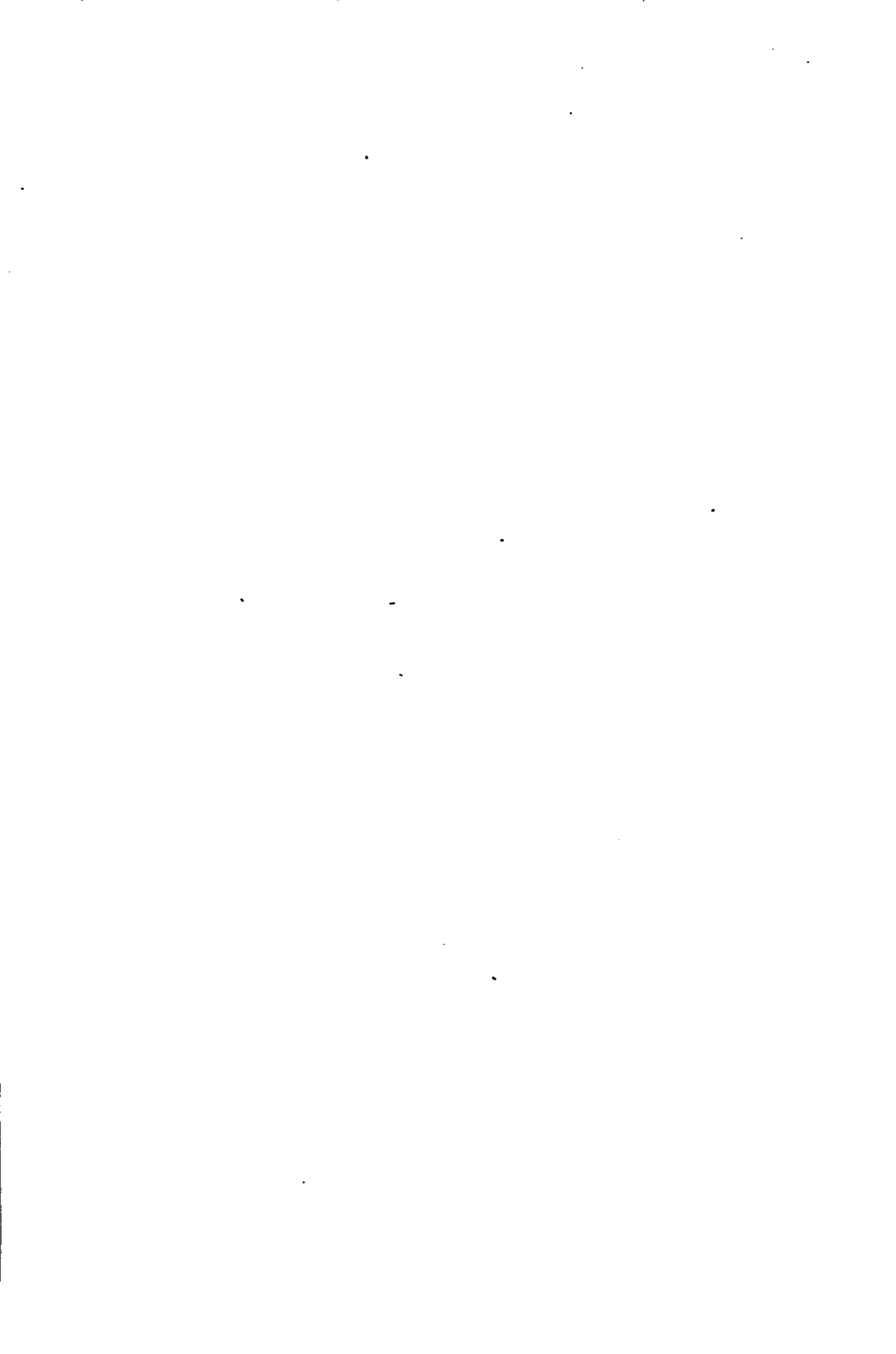




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FORES'S
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A Quarterly Magazine

DESCRIPTIVE OF

**BRITISH, INDIAN, COLONIAL, AND
FOREIGN SPORT.**

WITH

Thirty-two Full-page Illustrations.

VOLUME XI.

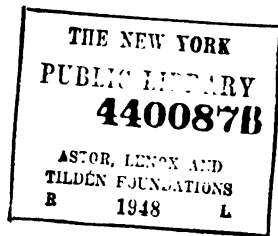
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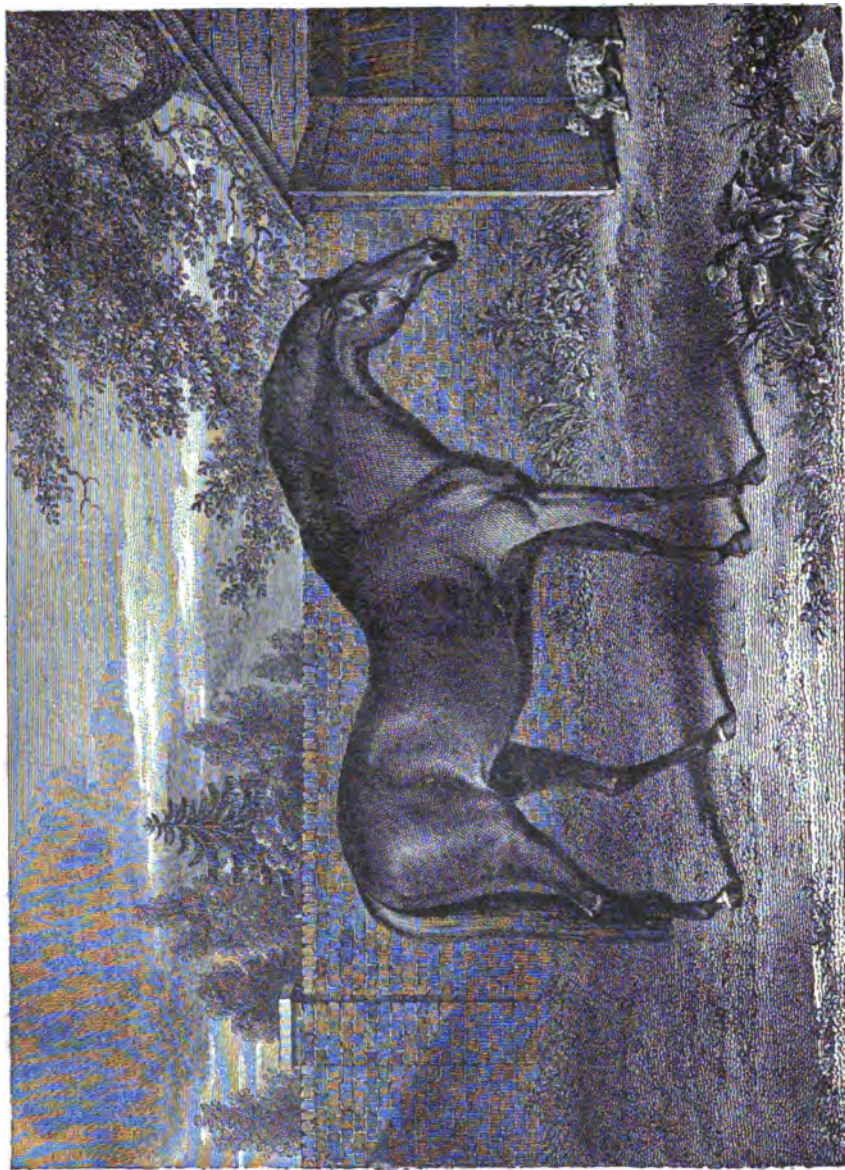
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THE GODOLPHIN ARABIAN.
After G. Stubbs, R.A.

FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

THE GODOLPHIN ARABIAN.

By 'PECKWATER.'

CHAPTER I.



FROM the notable examples of thorough-bred horses, which have been presented to our readers in previous numbers of this magazine, and a reference to the works which have been mentioned as containing full pedigrees and particulars of the early descent of our racehorses, it will be seen that through three Eastern lines the origin of nearly all our best horses may be traced, the representatives of which are the Byerley Turk, the Darley Arabian, and the Godolphin Arabian.

The title of the last-named sire suggests a variety of romantic impressions which some, no doubt, may be able vaguely to recall, so that, apart from all stud-book considerations, an account of this horse's marvellous career may prove generally welcome, notwithstanding the somewhat fantastic source from which it is derived. But we will proceed, firstly, to consider this renowned stranger as a sire, and draw the reader's attention to the influence he has so consistently exercised on the breed of our racehorses. From the pedigrees which will be cited as examples, it will be seen that where the blood of the Godolphin extensively prevailed success uniformly followed, not only immediately, but in results which may be traced through succeeding generations.

Taking Eclipse as the first example, we see that his dam is by Regulus, a son of Godolphin, and that one-fourth of her pedigree includes the same blood.

As a second instance let us look at Penelope, one of the most famous matrons of all days, by Trumpator by Matchem;

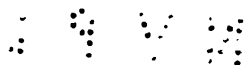
she was inbred to Godolphin through five strains, and when mated with Waxy, owning three similar strains, she produced Whalebone, Whisker, and many others of note.

To the first of these we must accord the highest honours of illustrious paternity, for when we look through the list of sires of the present day, we find we cannot get away from the fact that through Birdcatcher and Touchstone we possess most of the blood which is now considered of the highest value. We have only to mention the names of Bendigo, Bend Or, Isonomy and his sons, Minting, Muncaster, Ormonde, Robert the Devil, and Wisdom, to show what we owe to Birdcatcher; while Newminster, through Hermit and Hampton, has amply sustained the honour of Touchstone. Harkaway, again, a grandson of Whisker, in the male line, is only represented by the descendants of his son, King Tom, but the pedigree of this once-famous horse is another instance where the Godolphin blood preponderates, and it is most fortunate that through the union of Harkaway with Pocahontas we possess, in the produce of King Tom, some of the most valuable brood mares of our day. St. Angela, the dam of St. Simon, for instance; Princess, the dam of Royal Hampton, with many others.

But the most notable instance is to be seen in the pedigree of Melbourne, which is literally full of Godolphin blood, the value of which is amply proved by the excellence of such progeny as Blink Bonny, Canezou, Cymba, Marchioness, Menteure Lass, Sir Tatton Sykes, and West Australian.

In Mr. Bowes's mare, Gibside Fairy, the dam of Emma, the dam of Cotherstone, and of Mowerina, the dam of West Australian, is to be traced a similar influence, so that we may safely assert without further evidence that not the least celebrated of Eastern sires is the Godolphin Arabian.

And now for the history of our hero. According to stud-book records, this horse was picked up in Paris about 1728, by Mr. Coke of Norfolk. He was in sorry plight, and was used to draw a water-cart. Mr. Coke gave him to Mr. R. Williams, the keeper of the St. James's Coffee-house, by whom he was presented to the Earl of Godolphin. So much for history; but in our school-boy days we used to enjoy a full and romantic account of how all this came about from the pen of an enthusiastic Frenchman, a sketch of which we hope to present to our readers in such a form as will preserve all the precious details of this most interesting case.



The critical student of stud-book lore will, of course, pronounce the whole story to be a myth, just as at school, after we had enjoyed mastering the interesting episodes in ancient history, some ruthless critic would come upon the scene and declare the whole thing to be mythical legends, and reduce all we had placed implicit faith in to a mass of dry bones and commonplace incident—so, no doubt, it will be now. Nevertheless, we will transport the reader to Paris in the winter of 1732, and in a hovel in the Rue Guénégard, ask his imagination to picture to itself the following details of misery and cruelty : At one end of a half-open shed there stood a wretched quadruped, nearly paralysed by the damp cold which pervaded his unwholesome apology for a stable. You felt unwilling to dignify the poor animal by the name of horse, for it is to be hoped you had never before set eyes upon the noble creature in such a plight as this, yet a horse it was, and one which, notwithstanding its wretchedness and debility, was expected daily to do a day's work of the hardest kind.

Seated on the ground by the poor animal's side, a strange figure might with difficulty be discerned, clad in a sort of Oriental costume with a cloak of camel's hair thrown over his shoulders. Too miserable to sleep, this poor wretch squatted patiently within reach of the horse's head, waiting for him to bend it down towards his face, when he would breathe into the horse's nostrils and gently chafe its cold, clammy ears with his own numbed fingers. Between these two there evidently existed a deep sympathy ; but there was yet a third member of this strange society, and that was a large grey cat which had perched itself on the horse's quarters. Grimalkin was the best favoured of the three, for the mice which swarmed throughout the building sufficed to keep him in good condition. He had just returned from his night's foray, and had, with a full stomach, taken up his accustomed position on his favourite's loins, imparting thereby some of the warmth of his own well-nourished body to the frame of skin and bone which shivered beneath him.

The wintry dawn was soon to break, and then another day of hardship and cruelty was to be endured by two, at least, of these miserable creatures ; but for some hours before, the man had been constantly employed in caring for his beloved horse's wants. The brutal, drunken carter who owned him had left in the lock the key of the corn-bin, and Agba (for that was this man's name) had seized the opportunity to minister to his

companion's needs ; seldom did such a chance offer itself, and Agba knew full well the penalty he should have to pay for taking advantage of it. The poor horse was too weak and sore to lie down regularly at night ; he would stand, wearily resting first one leg and then another, until at times he would drop down in his sleep when overcome by sheer exhaustion. Agba had waited noiselessly until he thought his loved one had enjoyed sufficient rest ; he then proceeded to coax him to eat the musty oats he hesitated not to appropriate for his benefit. But so foul was the corn, that the horse's enfeebled appetite could not be tempted to partake of it. Then a bright idea struck Agba. He would light a fire, boil some water in the old kettle he had hidden away, and scald the stinking oats, hoping thus to make them palatable. In the courtyard outside he made his fire, and, to his great joy, succeeded in his benevolent purpose. After drinking sparingly of the chilled water, the horse was enticed to eat some of the sweetened corn from his attendant's hand, till little by little he had consumed a goodly bait : at intervals he had taken a few swallows of the chilled water, so that Agba's patience was at length rewarded. 'You will have strength for this day's work, at all events,' he thought, and then he shuddered to think what the day might bring forth. He had not long to wait for the first instalment of the day's troubles, for, before sunrise, the clatter of the carter's wooden shoes was heard on the flags of the courtyard, and, with his glimmering lanthorn, he was soon peering round the foul hovel he called his stable. He approached the horse warily. 'You evil brute ! it isn't much food you shall get until you have earned it this day,' he said, with a plentiful crop of imprecations thrown in. Taking up a shovel he scraped up some remnants of chaff that had been cut overnight, and stealthily approached the manger. 'Take this, you son of the Evil One !' he exclaimed, throwing the mess in front of the horse. Agba had, unnoticed by the carter, let out the horse's head-chain to give him more liberty, and before the carter could get out of his reach he had rushed open-mouthed at his tormentor, and, with a blow from one of his fore feet, had struck the shovel from the man's hand, hitting him at the same time on the wrist with such force that he fell back, bellowing with fright and pain. All sorts of vengeance he vowed he would take when he had the opportunity ; but it was useless for him to attempt either with whip or fork to punish his victim now, for such was the horse's reach, and with such effect did he

lash out with his hind legs, that it was impossible for the carter to get within striking distance of him. He then, as well as his injured wrist allowed, began to take down the harness ; but how to get this on the animal he had goaded to desperation seemed to puzzle him. At length he turned to Agba, and his eye fell upon the key in the corn-bin. 'Aha ! you have been stealing my corn again, have you ? I will teach you a lesson !' aiming a savage kick at Agba, which he dexterously avoided. After a pause, he bade Agba harness the horse and lead him out to where the cart was standing.

'I would kill the brute by slow torture if I could afford it,' he muttered, and it was only this consideration which prevented him wreaking his spite upon the animal. Sell him again even for the small price he had given for the poor brute he could not, and his only alternative was to get all the work out of him he could, and keep the mysterious Agba to help to manage him. He next addressed Agba : 'Come with me to the brickfield and help to load the cart. I will take the corn you have stolen out of the demon before we come back !' he declared.

The carter managed, with Agba's help, to load his cart with bricks, heaping two extra courses on the usual load, and then returned with it to the city. Agba was dismissed with a curse, 'to go and beg his bread,' as was his daily custom from those who now charitably relieved him. It was needless for the carter to order him to be at the stable ready to take the horse when he came home, since to wait upon the poor creature, and to try to alleviate his misery, was the sole aim of this devoted fellow's life. A few crusts of bread and a small quantity of fruit constituted his daily sustenance, with a scanty allowance of milk, which he shared with his fellow-lodger in misfortune, the grey Grimalkin.

CHAPTER II.

THE streets were now thronged with passengers, and the roadways were very slippery from the rain and frost which had just begun to give a little. So heavy was the load of bricks which our emaciated horse was compelled to drag along that even on the level road he had to strain every muscle to keep the cart moving. His owner now had him at his own vicious will, and did not fail to let him feel that he was completely in his power. Whenever he attempted to pause in his heart-breaking struggle, the heavy thonged whip lashed his loin and

flank, leaving a contused wheal, and even drawing blood at each merciless stroke. At length, on beginning to make the slight ascent near the corner of the Pont Neuf at the angle of the Rue Dauphin, the poor horse's feet could make no impression on the frozen surface of the pavement. The more he struggled the more exhausted he became, while his savage driver redoubled his lashings, and when the thong failed to urge the panting victim forward the heavy whip-stock was applied with brutal ferocity to head, legs, and body, until the poor animal seemed utterly stupefied from such inhuman violence. Sweating and trembling all over he made his last desperate effort; he fell back, and then dashing into his collar with all his force, sparks flying in streams from the pavement as he struggled, he just moved the wheels slightly forward, then he lost his foothold, fell heavily on to his knees, and with a groan turned over on to his side, the shafts of the heavily loaded cart pinning him fast to the ground.

One would have thought such sufferings would have provoked the bystanders to interfere on behalf of the fallen animal, but not a bit of it; some looked on with stolid apathy, while others seemed to enjoy the horrors of the scene. The carter on his part tried with kicks and blows to force the prostrate horse to struggle to regain his footing, but this the shafts of the cart rendered impossible for him to effect. At last, with a savage grin, he remarked, 'The sly brute is only shamming. I've got something in the cart will stir him up.' Then, from the back of it he produced a wisp of straw, which he proceeded to set fire to from his tinder-box with the intention of applying it all ablaze to the horse's flanks, when his arm was seized from behind.

'Who dares meddle with me?' exclaimed the furious carter, gripping his whip-stock and trying to face his supposed antagonist.

Behind him in the throng a tall, powerful man, dressed in Quaker's garb, was standing; he had pushed his way through the crowd with the intention of protesting against all this brutality. The carter had now freed himself from the stranger's grasp, and fiercely threatened to strike him; but something in the Quaker's fearless demeanour made him stay his hand.

'Friend, lay down thy weapon and listen to me! Wilt thou sell thy horse to me for fifteen louis?' the Quaker calmly asked.

The carter stared at him with open mouth, and the bystanders chuckled at the bare notion of such an offer. The Quaker held the coins in his hand: 'Here is the money; take one of them and have it tested to see if it be good.'

'But why on earth do you want to buy such a worn-out rip as this?' the carter asked.

'What is that to thee, friend? Have the money tested and be content.'

The carter took one of the coins to a shop close at hand, and returned with the assurance that it was all right.

'Before I pay thee, friend, thou must free the poor horse from its burden and then lead him to thy stable,' the Quaker insisted.

'Oh! that's a part of the bargain easily acquitted. But fancy fifteen louis for the worthless screw!' the carter muttered.

By the aid of those around the cart was quickly unloaded and dragged away from the fallen horse, and then he was with difficulty helped to rise. A dreadful-looking object! his knees broken and bleeding, blood also flowing from his nostrils and his skin whealed, while his bruised limbs tottered and at first refused to bear his weight. After a few minutes he could manage to walk slowly, and he was led off in the company of his new owner to his filthy stable. On the way thither the carter became quite good-tempered and communicative to his new acquaintance.

'You will see a queer sight when we get to the stable—this horse has a groom all to himself; there will be something else ready to receive him too,' he told the Quaker.

'What is that?' the latter inquired.

'Why, a large, spiteful grey cat.'

'And how can you afford to keep a groom solely to look after a horse like this?'

'Why, you see, this horse came from foreign parts,' the carter went on to explain. 'He and seven others were sent as a present to the King; but his Majesty did not like the look of them, and they were taken no care of, and used for all sorts of hack-work. Then each horse had his own groom, a set of blackamoors that had been used to bring over horses to France and England; and this horse, from what I can learn, they set great store by where he was bred; and, if you believe me, his groom has never left him since he set foot in this country. He might have gone back with the other grooms; but no, he sticks to the horse

wherever he is, and cares for nothing except to watch and attend to him. Then the cat is just as fond of the brute as he is of Grimalkin. But you will see for yourself when we get inside.'

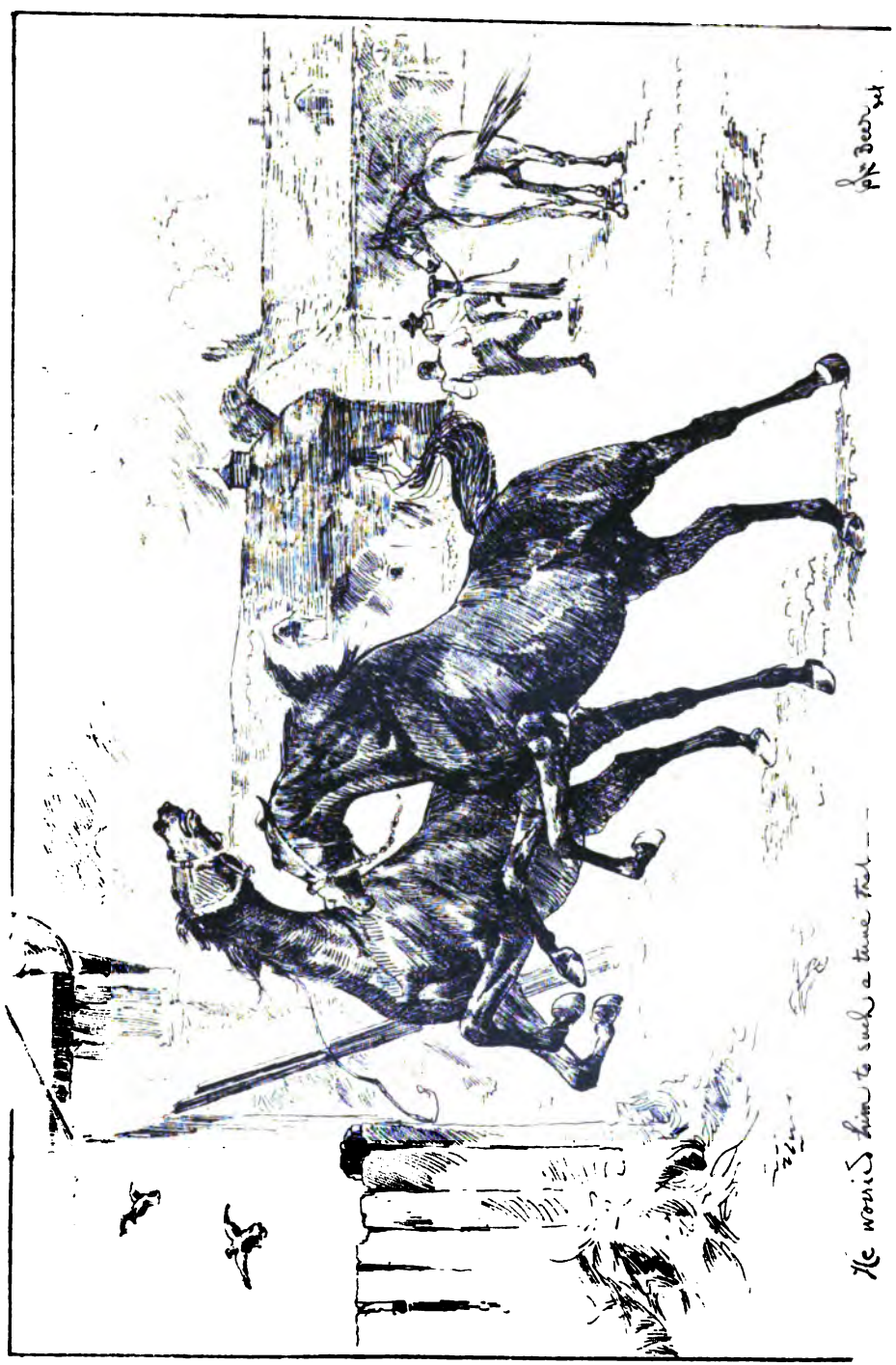
The Quaker's curiosity was highly excited by this narrative. He was in the habit of visiting Paris every year on business, and was quite at home with its inhabitants.

'I suppose this poor fellow can give me full information about himself and the horse?' he asked.

'Why, bless you! this Agba, as he is called, is as dumb as my whipstock; he knows all that's said to him in more languages than one, for the grooms that came with him told us all about him, and how he had several times crossed the sea with their brutes of horses—bad luck to them all, I say! And now look you, master. You seem a kind-hearted sort of a man, and are to give me a good price for this horse, so I will tell you he is the savagest brute I ever was in a stable with, and with other horses he is a perfect demon—for, poor as he looks, he has the insolence to act like a stallion still; so, as you are going to take the horse, you must take his groom along and Grimalkin—that is the cat—as well; for I can afford to let you have the lot of them all for the same money.'

The Quaker laughed heartily at the carter's impudence, but at first the idea of being saddled with a dumb foreigner and a cat, as well as this ill-disposed quadruped, rather staggered him; he, however, thought he would see how the trio behaved before deciding upon this man's offer.

The Quaker was very wealthy, so expense was no object with him; and being a man of very pious principles, which prompted him never to pass over any opportunity of relieving distress or suffering, he had thus interposed to rescue this poor persecuted animal from the cruelty he had, with the greatest pain, just witnessed. Besides, he himself had that morning received tidings which relieved him from a load of anxiety, and he was only too thankful to display his gratitude to Providence for the mercies vouchsafed to his beloved and only daughter, who had been safely delivered of a son and heir. In this benevolent mood he reached the carter's stable. Agba had not expected his favourite to return before nightfall, and was slumbering in his usual position with his cloak round him, and Grimalkin in his bosom. He had not heard the approach of the party until the door creaked on its rusty hinges; then he started up, and



He worried him to such a time that --

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seeing a stranger with his persecutor, he made him a low obeisance.

'This is "Scham's"' (for such was the horse's Eastern title) 'new master, and now you may clean him and do what you please with him,' the carter told the astonished Agba.

Joyfully the poor wretch hastened to the courtyard; but when he saw the bleeding knees, and found that they had been broken, his joy was turned to despair. This was the greatest misfortune that could happen to a steed of the Desert. After a time, however, Agba recovered himself, and, leading Scham into the hovel, he quickly ridded him of his cumbrous harness, and, as far as the wretched creature's sores would allow, he gently removed the mud from his skin, and with a pair of horsehair gloves, which he produced from a pocket in his cloak, rubbed him over softly; he then bathed his knees, and washed out his mane and tail, so, before his new owner left him, he looked an altered creature; while, walking skeleton as he was, the splendid formation of crest, shoulders, deep chest, and powerful limbs, relieved from the coating of mud and filth through Agba's tender ministrations, disclosed at once the certainty that Scham was a horse of no ordinary lineage.

The Quaker gazed with wonder and emotion at the touching scene before him. This horse, reputed to be an irreclaimable savage, was displaying the utmost tenderness and gratitude to his attendant for his kind treatment, dividing his attention between the man and the cat, which had taken possession of the manger. Before tasting his feed the horse licked the cat all over, a delicate attention which pussy gratefully acknowledged by loudly purring and other feline demonstrations of affection.

The carter had departed as soon as the fifteen louis had been paid, declaring he must go and buy another horse and remove the cart and the bricks from the roadway, or he should get into trouble. After expressing his thanks to the Quaker, he gave him the address of a groom in the royal stables, who could give him full information concerning Scham and his attendant, and this the Quaker determined to make use of. He had decided in his own mind to remove at once man, horse, and cat from this wretched hovel to a stable he had hired during his stay in Paris, and to effect this he left them to themselves, telling Agba that he should return before evening, and bring with him rugs and other requisites for conveying the party through the crowded streets.

'This is the most affectionate creature of a horse I ever beheld, and the savageness he may have displayed is due to nothing but ill-treatment. He will make an agreeable hackney for my son-in-law, the minister, to amble about on, and this poor foreigner I will maintain until an opportunity arises for transporting him to his native land.' Such were the merciful resolves of this worthy man; how they were requited the sequel will relate.

Some days after the rescue of these unfortunates, who now were living in comfort, or, rather, luxury, our Quaker made inquiries as the carter had directed him. He soon discovered that the ruffian had told him the truth, and that the horse he had purchased was one of eight barbs sent over in 1731 as a present to King Louis XV. by the Bey of Tunis. This horse, named Scham, was declared to be of the purest breed possessed by the Moors, and one of their most valuable sires. His pedigree and history were contained in a small bag of camel's hair, richly embroidered, and suspended from his neck by a silken cord.

But this, as well as certain amulets to preserve him from evil destinies, had been, to Agba's horror at such a sacrifice, thrown disdainfully on one side by the royal grooms, for horses from the East and Barbary were held of no esteem in France at this time, so these valuable presents, instead of being treated as most precious and worthy of the utmost care, were turned over to the comptroller of the royal kitchen, and used by him to draw the kitchen carts which ran from Paris to Versailles. But Scham did not submit to this degradation without vigorous protests, and so unmanageable did he become that the kitchen department was glad to get rid of him at any price, so, for a few crowns, he became the property of one of the worst scoundrels in the city. Agba, in despair at the evil fortunes of his beloved horse, who he fancied was destined for the highest honours in his new country, never deserted him. He had religiously preserved the bag containing the horse's pedigree and other appendages, which he displayed to his new owner with confidence and delight.

CHAPTER III.

AGBA had truly never utterly despaired of his horse's restoration to prosperity; the amulets he had rescued from the dunghill would, he felt confident, prevail against the evil influences to which Scham must of necessity be exposed. It

must be explained that the Moors and Arabs recognise seventy prophetic signs of good or evil fortune regulating a horse's destiny—of these, Scham had two indications which portended good and evil in a remarkable degree. The first was a form resembling a wheatear to be seen in the centre of his chest, arising from a curious arrangement of the hair. These wheat-ears the Arabs consider to be the most baneful prognostics of misfortune to the horse that bears them. The second was a clear white spot which Scham had on his near hind foot. This, on the other hand, foretold a life that would be long and illustrious, while his numerous progeny would share his honours.

Agba's faith in the white spot and in the amulets, which he knew ought to control the malignity of the wheatear, was so constant and unwavering that he devoted his whole life to his horse's fortunes, being determined to assist and comfort him during the dark periods of his destiny, feeling sure that he would ultimately be rewarded by sharing the horse's predicted glory. Had there been no counteracting spell to his evil lot, Agba would have abandoned all hope and left Scham to his fate. He used to recall to his own support the glories of Scham's lineage and early career. 'Was he not a son of "the kings of the wind," himself unbeaten for speed by any other of the race, for a time the lord of his master's harem, to whom all the choicest mares had been assigned, and sent to France to perpetuate the glories of his unrivalled race in the realms of its mighty potentate?' Verily, the white spot had been under a cloud, but now, through the intervention of this merciful Englishman, the wheatear had been blasted, and the white spot shone forth once more with pristine brilliancy.

It appeared, indeed, as if Scham had reached the utmost limit of misfortune, and the tide had turned for good in his favour, for since his arrival in England both he and his companions had enjoyed a life of perfect ease and comfort. But Scham, like many other quadrupeds—aye, and bipeds too—could not 'stand oats.' This ease and good living raised him above himself, so that even Agba with difficulty kept him in order. As for the poor minister who essayed to enjoy a quiet ride on his back, he had never been placed in such peril in all his life before.

On the first occasion, Agba, much against his own will, had placed the minister on Scham's back, and had led him out on to the high road leading to the Downs, which extended for

miles in that neighbourhood. Scham no sooner trod the elastic sward and sniffed the morning breeze, than he was off in a mad gallop, and bore the distracted preacher, minus hat and periwig, for miles over hill and vale, until their career was arrested by a deep quagmire, through which Scham with difficulty floundered, leaving his rider on his back in the miry bog, out of which some friendly peasants dragged him, more dead than alive.

The Quaker declared this behaviour was due to the light bridle which Scham wore, so the next time they put a very powerful bit in his mouth, with the result that, as soon as the minister gathered up his reins and Scham felt the sharpness of the bit, he reared up, and his rider found himself on the hard road, bruised and shaken most alarmingly. Next they engaged a well-known horsebreaker to undertake Scham's management, but he fared no better than the inexperienced minister, for at the first application of whip and spur Scham, with a series of kicks and plunges, flung the rough-rider clean over his head, disabling him so far that he could not or would not mount him again.

This proved to be the climax, for next day the Quaker, much against his own merciful inclination, determined to inform Agba that he could keep the horse no longer. He framed an indictment comprising Scham's most serious misdemeanours, which he went through *seriatim* to give the Moor an opportunity of offering some excuse for his favourite's conduct. The cases of the minister and the horsebreaker we are acquainted with already; then came a charge of biting off the ear of the Quaker's white pony. Agba, through his signs and pantomime, showed that Scham hated horses of a white colour. He had also attacked a black horse, for which offence the mute urged a similar excuse. 'Lastly,' the Quaker urged most solemnly, 'when you were leading this ungovernable creature in the lane the other day, he broke away from you and set upon my dear friend John Playfair's brown mare (so colour offers no excuse for him this time), seizing her by the crest and using such violence with his fore-legs as to thrust her rider violently from the saddle, and hurl him senseless on to the hard, stony road. How do you excuse such conduct as this?'

Agba now went through a variety of complacent grimaces and signs which demonstrated to the pious Quaker that this was a case of '*incertam rapiens Venerem.*' Shocked and indignant beyond power of expression, he pronounced his verdict.

'Agba, such a horse as this is not a fit possession for a decent man to keep near his household, and he must go,' the worthy man declared feelingly, seeing the painful agitation his words caused.

We will not dwell further on this incident. Notwithstanding Agba's entreaties, most vividly expressed in his own earnest way, Scham was sent off to London under his charge, attended by a groom to show him the way. Before he left the Quaker gave him some money for the journey, bidding him return after he had left the horse with his new owner, and promising him funds to enable him to return to Tunis. But he returned not—and the Quaker saw him no more.

Now, Agba felt assured that the evil influence of the wheat-ear had again gained the upper hand, for on his arrival at the stables of Mr. Rogers (or Mr. Williams, as given in the historical records) the horse was at once taken away from him and he was driven ignominiously from the stable-yard. Mr. Rogers had visited the Quaker's stables before purchasing the horse, and had noticed how completely he was under Agba's control, and that no one else could go near him, so he had made up his mind to separate the two as soon as the horse came into his possession. In vain did Agba try for more than a month to gain an entrance to the stables; but there was always some surly groom handy who would threaten him with a horse-whip if he dared to cross the threshold. Grimalkin, the cat, had travelled on Scham's back, and still was allowed to enjoy his friend's society, while poor Agba was as rigidly excluded from it. Agba lurked about the neighbourhood, hoping to get at least a sight of Scham when taken out to exercise; but the horse never once left the stable-yard. Agba had observed some ominous signs of what had been going on; once he saw a disabled groom being carried to the hospital, and soon afterwards he noticed that Mr. Rogers himself walked about by the aid of a crutch, and with a bandage round his forehead. Mr. Rogers considered himself an expert horseman; but he had not been equal to mastering Scham, who had flung him in the stable-yard, striking him as he fell with a hind foot—the groom had met with even a worse disaster. At length, Agba, rendered desperate, determined to scale the walls at night and contrive to gain a sight of his beloved Scham. With great difficulty he succeeded. To his horror he found the horse in more evil plight, if such were possible, than when the carter owned him.

His head was tied up close to the rack by an iron chain, his fore and hind feet were closely hobbled, and he evidently was nearly starved to death ; besides this ill-treatment his strength had gradually been reduced by frequent bleedings. While Agba was sorrowfully examining all these injuries, several grooms, attracted by the light which the intruder had provided, rushed in and secured him.

Next day he was brought before a magistrate and committed to prison, charged with breaking into Mr. Rogers' stable with felonious intent. Now the fortunes of Scham and the faithful Moor had reached their most desperate point ; but fortunately the Quaker had made inquiries as to Agba's doings since he did not return to him, and, finding out what had happened, he set to work to obtain his release. He represented the case to a noble lady who interested herself on behalf of poor prisoners, and she determined to visit Agba in the prison. The Lord Godolphin, who was her nephew, accompanied her, and so touched were they by this poor alien's misfortunes, owing as they were to his affectionate devotion to his favourite horse, that at Agba's trial the case was properly brought under the judge's notice, and he directed Agba to be acquitted, and, to complete his happiness, Lord Godolphin promised to purchase Scham and to send them to Gog Magog, his lordship's estate in Cambridgeshire, where he maintained a large racing and breeding establishment.

Again was Agba raised to the seventh heaven of delight when he, Scham, and Grimalkin, found themselves comfortably settled in their new abode. But Agba little thought what humiliating functions his favourite would be called upon to perform ; if he had known all this, he would rather have had him die the most miserable of deaths—this would have been preferable, to his ideas, to degradation and dishonour. For soon Agba discovered that the stud groom intended to use 'the miserable weed,' as he styled Agba's proud barb, as the understudy of their favourite stallion, Hobgoblin, or, in vulgar parlance, Scham was to act as Hobgoblin's 'teazer.'

This Hobgoblin was fancied by his owner and those connected with the stable to be a horse of priceless worth, and his produce were expected to surpass any colts that had been bred in England. This pampered lord of the harem inhabited a pavilion built expressly for his accommodation ; his box was padded all round, while silken curtains shrouded the doorway,

which was approached through a corridor paved with the choicest bricks, which were polished daily and then covered with fine sand. When Agba had seen this bloated aristocrat, and had learned the purpose for which Scham was brought to Gog Magog, his passionate envy prompted him to either kill Hobgoblin stealthily or to remove his own favourite from the pollution of his vicinity. But it was soon fated that Agba's envy and hatred should reach the crowning pitch of all deadly passions, and this was brought about through the arrival of that peerless mare, Roxana, the destined bride of the abhorred Hobgoblin.

Roxana is described as the most beautiful mare of her day, and the winner of many races at Newmarket, but of such a sensitive, nervous temperament that she could not endure the close companionship of other horses ; accordingly it was found necessary to lead her blindfolded to the starting-post, setting her free the moment the word 'off !' was given. Such was her speed, that she always jumped off with the lead and kept it to the finish, quitting the racecourse for the stud with an unbeaten record. Agba certainly had never set eyes on such a beauty since he quitted his native deserts, and when the day of her espousal with the fat, overfed Hobgoblin had arrived, he determined to have his revenge for all the humiliations Scham had undergone. So furious had this highly bred son of 'the kings of the wind' become, owing to his frequent tantalising disappointments, that even Agba now controlled him with difficulty.

On the morning of the intended union, from which the most auspicious results had been anticipated, Lord Godolphin himself was present in the corridor adjoining the stable-yard. First of all, when Scham was led out to perform his hateful task, the delicate Roxana received his approach with gentle complacency, and when he was led back with difficulty by the indignant Agba, she exhibited most expressive tokens of her disappointment. Next, the languid, indifferent Hobgoblin appears on the stage ; but his advances Roxana repelled with such fury that her attendant groom was in danger of receiving severe injury from her. Agba could no longer endure the sight : hastily unbuckling Scham's leading-rein, he opened the door of his loose box and gave him his liberty. With a roar, as that of some wild beast escaped from its cage, Scham bounded into the courtyard ; so panic-stricken were the two grooms, that the leader of

Hobgoblin abandoned his horse to his fate and fled from the courtyard for his life, while the attendant of Roxana, after hastily tying her leading-rein to a post, followed his example. Then began to rage such a combat as the onlookers had never beheld before. After eyeing each other for a second, the two stallions charged with such force that they both staggered backwards for a yard or two; after a pause they closed, and then Hobgoblin, who was by far the heavier, seemed to gain a slight advantage. He had gripped Scham across the loins with his teeth, and bore him down by his superior weight. The pain only rendered Scham more furious; he quickly recovered himself, and, when free from his enemy's teeth, he showered such vigorous blows upon him with his fore feet, that Hobgoblin became half-stunned and helpless. Besides, the latter was so fat and out of condition for violent exertion that he was soon at Scham's mercy. With his teeth firmly set in Hobgoblin's crest, he worried him to such a tune that, when the lord of the harem was able to get from him, he slunk off cowed and beaten, and took refuge in Scham's empty box.

Roxana had beheld the battle with anxiety and dismay; but when it was concluded, she welcomed the victor with no uncertain sounds.

'None but the brave deserve the fair!' she no doubt meant to express, for Scham quickly responded to her gentle solicitations; but now it will be opportune to call for 'Curtain.'

* * * * *

Lord Godolphin was in a terrible rage at the behaviour both of Agba and of his cowardly grooms. Roxana he now considered worthless as a brood mare, while Agba and Scham he sentenced to perpetual banishment to a lone, wild farm, some miles away from his mansion.

Again Agba knew that the evil wheatear was in the ascendant. Still, he had faith in the potency of the white spot, since some two years after this tragic incident we read of him seated at the door of a lowly hut, with Grimalkin as a companion, while Scham, at full liberty is ranging a spacious pasture, now and then returning at full speed to greet his faithful friend, and to receive from him those caresses he is never weary of bestowing.

Adjoining the hut is a shed which Agba has spared no pains to make comfortable for his horse's tenancy. Scham, now getting on in years, looks rough in his coat from daily exposure, notwithstanding Agba's constant endeavours to make



in decked with gorgeous Eastern trappings;

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him appear worthy of his high birth and former renown. Still he is healthy and full of vigour.

‘Will the white spot ever again assert its prominence, and how?’ Agba is wondering, when the notes of a horn frequently sounded reach his ears, and set Scham snorting and quivering in every limb. He steps proudly forward as if to reply to the challenge, when a light waggon is driven close up to the enclosure, and Lord Godolphin’s stud groom alights and beckons to Agba to come to him.

Agba was speedily made to understand that Scham’s day of triumph had at last arrived. The result of the horse’s illicit union with Roxana had been the birth of a puny foal they named Lath; but the colt grew on, and proved itself to be so far superior to the stock sired by Hobgoblin that Lord Godolphin decided to recall the exile and to give him a fair trial at the stud. His judgment was rewarded beyond his most sanguine expectations, for before many years had passed the progeny of Scham proved itself to be invincible.

Of one day’s racing at Newmarket the following record is most remarkable: a race for three-year-old colts was won by Regulus; a race for four-year-olds was won by Cade; and a race for five-year-olds was won by Lath—all of them sons of Scham.

And Scham, now recognised to be the most illustrious sire of his day, was present on the Heath to witness the triumph of his sons. Decked with gorgeous Eastern trappings, and led by a groom on either side holding a golden leading-rein, Scham, notwithstanding all the hardships and cruelty he had suffered, displayed in his matchless form the vaunted perfection of his race. Agba was mounted on his back; a faithful believer in destiny, he had now received his reward. On their return to Gog Magog they found the palatial residence erected for Hobgoblin’s comfort ready to receive them, for on the entrance was to be seen in gilt letters—

‘GODOLPHIN, THE ARABIAN,’

the name of Hobgoblin having been ignominiously erased, while this ex-favourite was called upon to perform for the Godolphin those humiliating duties which fell to the lot of Scham on his first arrival at Gog Magog.

Scham lived to the age of twenty-nine years, and his likeness, with Grimalkin as a companion, it is said, is still preserved at

Gog Magog House. He died full of honours in the year 1753, and was buried in a vaulted passage leading to his stable under a slab of white marble bearing his illustrious name.

REGGIE TO THE RESCUE.

By 'TIM WHIFFLER.'

IT is the Monday after the Ascot week, and the Ladies' Mile is crowded. Everybody is discussing the one topic—the Royal Meeting, just past and gone—the pretty faces, the lovely frocks, and, of course, the racing itself.

It has, indeed, been a most successful gathering of the clans. The weather was simply glorious, the stands and enclosure were filled with brave men and fair women. Royalty was more strongly represented than usual, and the racing itself was exciting to a degree. There was, indeed, only one fault to be found with it, and that was that the favourites declined to win, and the 'swells,' in consequence, had anything but a good time of it. It has been, indeed, from the backer's point of view, just about the most disastrous Ascot within the memory of man, celebrated though it has been from time immemorial for the overturning of many a 'good thing.'

A good-looking young fellow, walking slowly along towards Hyde Park Corner, looking straight before him in a vacant sort of way, and paying no heed to sundry bright eyes that are turned admiringly—some pityingly—on him from the chairs under the trees, and equally blind to sundry winks and nods on the part of their male companions, to all appearance may be put down as not having come scatheless out of the battle.

Rumour has it, indeed, that Reggie Nethersole has been hit very hard; that Ascot has finished what the Guineas and Derby had begun, and that he is, to use an expression of the day, 'stone broke;' and rumour, for once, is not very far wrong. As he walks along, biting savagely at his cigar, Reggie is thinking what on earth is to be done *in futuro*: how he is going to 'settle;' above all, how he is going to live.

Heavily in debt, his property mortgaged up to the hilt, his bills declined by the Jews, and not above a hundred at his banker's, if as much. No! he can't see his way out of the mess

at all. The more he thinks of the outlook, the less he likes it. How he wishes now he had stuck to the Army. The first fling when he came into his property, and gave a loose rein to pleasure, was all right; but after a time he was obliged to confess to himself that doing nothing was a very laborious occupation. And how unsatisfactory! He never could have believed that he would have got as *blasé* in a short space of time as he had. The same round of amusements day after day. Sandown, Kempton, Hurlingham, the Ranelagh, the theatres—they all seemed alike, somehow; and how sick and tired he was of all of them!

Lost in meditation, he had just got to the end of the Row, when a loud shout made him raise his head and look around him. The cause of the sudden commotion was a horse who, having got the best of his rider, came galloping along towards the gate, scattering the bystanders right and left. A pretty girl, in the act of crossing, stood directly in its path, apparently paralysed with fright, and unable even to scream. Another second and she would be run down, but quick as thought Reggie, rushing hastily forward, had clasped the girl in his arms, with the intention of pulling her out of the way; but he was just too late, for the maddened brute, in spite of the frantic efforts of his rider, charged right into Reggie and the girl, rolling them over in the dirt, and pursuing his wild career until pulled up by the crush of vehicles in Piccadilly.

Reggie quickly rose to his feet half dazed but otherwise unhurt; but the girl he had attempted to rescue lay still on the ground, apparently stunned, if not worse. How pretty she looked! As he gazed on the pale features, tranquil as if in sleep, he thought he had never seen a more lovely face.

‘Help me to put her into a cab,’ said he to a policeman who had come up, ‘and for God’s sake, man, keep the crowd off, and let her have some air!’

Between them they lifted her into a four-wheeler, allowed on this occasion only to enter the sacred precincts of the park; and Reggie having followed his lovely burden, considered a moment ere he answered the policeman’s question of ‘Where to, sir?’

‘Tell him to go to—to—yes!—tell him to go to the Albany, Piccadilly, and as fast as he can.’

‘Why not?’ he said to himself. ‘Mrs. Meggison’ (his house-keeper) ‘will attend to her, and I’ll send for a doctor as soon as

we get there, and surely that is better than carting her off to a hospital.'

Oh, Reggie! Reggie! if the rescued one had been old and fat and ugly, I wonder whether the latter institution would not have been voted the more fitting receptacle? I trow, yes. What a world it is, my masters!

CHAPTER II.

ARRIVED in his rooms in the Albany, his fair charge was promptly laid upon Reggie's bed, and placed under the personal superintendence of his worthy housekeeper, Mrs. Meggison, whilst the former's servant was dispatched straightway for the nearest doctor.

'Poor pretty!' observed Mrs. Meggison, with a doleful sigh, as she applied a series of restoratives, such as smelling salts, eau-de-cologne, &c., one after another without the slightest effect. 'I'm very much afraid, sir,' she went on, 'that she's going 'ome. What a dreadful thing to 'appen, isn't it, sir? And with a man in the 'ouse, too! Troubles never seem to come singly, do they?'

'Man in the house!' exclaimed Reggie; 'what do you mean, Meggison?'

'What I say, sir,' was the reply. 'A man arrived here not half an hour after you went out—a dreadful person—and has never stopped smoking ever since he's been on the premises. I can smell his pipe as I sit here, and so can you, sir, if you sniff, I feel sure. It wasn't a bit of use my telling 'im nothing but cigars and cigarettes was smoked here. He up and says d'reckly, "All right, old girl," he says, "fetch some of 'em along as soon as you like; the bigger the better. I'll smoke 'em."''

'Well, but who is he, in the name of goodness, my good woman?' inquired Reggie, with an impatient stamp of his foot.

'Who is he, sir? Why, I thought you knew,' said the loquacious housekeeper. He's come from Mr. Moss, of Old Burlington Street, he says, for three thousand four hundred pounds, and he declares he's got orders not to go until he gets it.'

'Moss, of Old Burlington Street!' exclaimed Reggie. 'Well, that's too bad! I'll write to the old brute at once, and tell him to come round here. I suppose I shall have the whole pack at my brush presently.'

Going into the adjoining sitting-room, he sat down and

indited a letter to the money-lender. It was brief and to the point, and did not err on the score of politeness. Thus it ran:—

‘THE ALBANY,
‘*Moss,*
‘*Come round and see me, confound you!*
‘REGINALD NETHERSOLE.’

He had but just dispatched the note when the doctor arrived, who, after hearing an account of the disaster, was at once shown in to his patient. The result of his examination was eminently satisfactory.

‘A trifling concussion of the brain, my dear sir; a trifling concussion, that is all. Not the slightest danger, I assure you. Our fair patient will probably continue in her present state for the next half-hour, and after that it will be all plain sailing, I have told your good housekeeper to undress her and put her to bed, and I will call again in an hour’s time.’ And off went the doctor, having taken a considerable amount of anxiety off Reggie’s mind.

That gentleman’s next visitor was Mr. Moss, of Old Burlington Street, an elderly Hebrew of pleasing face and manners, and not at all like the typical usurer we make the acquaintance of in works of fiction. He was very polite, very sorry for Reggie’s difficulties, but very firm withal. In fact, he gave the latter plainly to understand he meant to have his money.

In vain his debtor stormed and raved, and upbraided the Jew with his ingratitude. The latter only shrugged his shoulders deprecatingly.

They were in the height of a stormy discussion—the money-lender, smarting under Reggie’s language, showing signs that he had got a temper of his own, as well—when the latter was suddenly called into the next room by his housekeeper.

‘I think she’s just a-coming to,’ she whispered, ‘and look! I’ve found this in the pocket of her dress.’

‘This’ was a card-case, which Reggie hastily opened, and, drawing forth a card, read the inscription thereon.

‘Good heavens! What an odd thing!’ he exclaimed, and then returned to the sitting-room.

‘Moss,’ said he, addressing the money-lender and handing him the card, ‘have you any relative living at “Laburnam Lodge, Maida Vale?”’

The Jew, adjusting his gold pince-nez, read the card, and immediately started up as if he were shot.

'Why, it's my daughter, sir!' he exclaimed excitedly. 'How did you come by this, may I ask?'

'Come into the next room, Mr. Moss, and I will answer your question,' was the reply.

The money-lender's gratitude, when he heard the story of her rescue from his daughter's lips, no words of mine could possibly do justice to. Suffice it to say, that the 'man in possession' was sent to the right-about in double quick time, and that Reggie gave up his rooms for the time being to Miss Moss's mamma (who bore traces, by the way, of having at one time been as good-looking as her daughter), until such time as the invalid recovered from the effects of her collision with the runaway horse. Their host, at the same time, promised, at no very distant period, to come and take what Mr. Moss called a 'bit of dinner' with the family at Laburnam House.

* * * *

SCENE—*The Park.*

Tom Tucker to Charlie Chatterbox (loq.)—'I say, ole f'ler, what a good-lookin' gal that wife of Nethersole's is! Who was she? Do you know?'

Charlie C.—'Why, old Moss, the money-lender of Old Burlington Street's only daughter, to be sure. I thought everybody knew that. Clever chap, Reggie! got fifty thou' *down*, so they say, and will have the lot when old Mo turns up his toes. Good business, eh?'

'*Jewced good*,' replied Tom.

THE STATUS OF THE IRISH HUNTER.

By 'TRIVIATOR.'



HE rapid transmission of news, accurate or very much the reverse, that is one of the glories and delights of this scientific age, has a good deal to do with the scares which are continually cropping up in our midst and creating panics more or less sensational. It is quite true that with the bane comes the antidote, with the poison the preservative! False tidings are promptly contradicted with our modern appliances; but a start is a great advantage in the race of life, as on every other course, and it is not always so easy to overtake the *ignis fatuus*, or to collar a calumny. Last summer

we suffered from a hay panic, which, however, was far from groundless, though exaggerated. Latterly, in England and Ireland too, we have heard a good deal about a water famine, but relief has come in every case. Influenza and typhoid fever, with their appropriate *bacilli*, are scaring us greatly now; and, if the Parliamentary pundits may be taken literally, our extinction as a nation or an empire may be expected to come quickly if certain millions are not expended at once in our dockyards. '*E pur si muove.*' Notwithstanding the scare-mongers, we continue to live, move, and have our being on this planet of ours, and many of us find life worth living, in spite of all these Cassandra cries. The last scare—that is to say, serious scare—has been created by Mr. Commissioner Wrench, of the Land Court in Ireland, who has frightened us from our propriety by his threnodies about the decadence of Irish hunters and their gradual degeneracy; for the cautious Commissioner allows that these Irish hunters have still a soul of goodness within them, though 'not so good as they ought to be.'

That a scare of a certain kind has been created is evident from the voluminous correspondence that has passed on this interesting topic, and the prominence given to it by English journals of weight and importance. Nor is the matter one merely affecting the world of sport, as it strikes at the source of our cavalry supplies; for Ireland has, for the greater part of a century, been considered the best grower of troopers and chargers, and it must be evident that, if our hunters are degenerating, so must the rank and file of our troopers and remounts, for they all come from a common stock; and there can be no doubt that many a cavalry horse would, if trained early, make a good hunter, while the fact that hunters *in esse* are considered potential war-horses is proved by the circumstance that many of them are registered, *so as to be available in the event of a war.*

That this is no mere fancy will be admitted, we think, when it is mentioned that Scots Grey was a cast-off trooper, Jonah another; while Poacher, a rejected trooper, carried Mrs. Lindsey-FitzPatrick so brilliantly on many occasions last season with the Meath and Ward-Union hounds, that he was voted good enough to train for a race at the Fairy House Easter Monday Chasing Meeting. These little examples show that Somerville was not wrong when he said or sung that the Chase was the image of war, a theme upon which the genial grocer of Great

Coram Street was wont to expatiate in his lectures, as well as in his interesting letters. From these observations it will be evident that, if Mr. Commissioner Wrench is accurate in his diagnosis of the Irish hunter, he has done the State some service in ventilating the question, for its ramifications extend much further than the microcosm of sport, and threaten the prestige of such arms as our cavalry and horse artillery, on which we spend large sums annually, and think we do not spend them in vain.

But has the stock degenerated? Let us apply the best-known criteria to investigate the truth of this matter. Not many years ago, when our War Office reorganized our trooper system, and took away from our cavalry colonels the privilege of mounting their regiments, experts were sent about in all quarters of the globe, where horses flourish in large numbers, to ascertain if capable war-horses could be obtained for the army on better terms than they could be got at home—that is to say, in Ireland. The result was that Canadians were tried, but with such marked unsucess that the experiment has not been repeated. Hungarian horses were also tried, and failed to please. This vain search for exotic troopers certainly does not argue any decadence in the status of the colts and fillies of Ireland, and, as foreign Governments buy in the open markets of Ireland, it may be presumed that they come to a somewhat similar conclusion.

Colonel St. Quintin and Major Wood, of the Remount Department in Ireland, have not found any deterioration in the colts and fillies that come before them for approval, and have hitherto experienced no difficulty in adequately mounting Her Majesty's cavalry. But Mr. Commissioner Wrench maintains that Irish hunters are not so good as they ought to be. We quite concur in the verdict, in one sense, for equine like human nature is full of imperfections; and the captious critic might *riposte*, and assert that even Mr. Commissioner Wrench, good as he certainly is, is not *quite* so good as he ought to be. But really this equivocal sentence only implies that the Irish hunter is not perfect—and what *is* perfect when tried by the highest standard, though Wordsworth has the temerity to talk of

‘A *perfect* woman, nobly planned,
To guide, to govern, and command?’

Certainly the perfect hunter has yet to be discovered, with the

philosopher's stone or the four-leaved shamrock, and when found we fear that he will be unattainable, as his price will be above rubies.

Mr. Ferguson certainly fancied that Harkaway, for whom he refused an enormous price, as prices then went, though he hunted him twice a week, and sent him to the post office on occasion for letters, approached perfection; and so did the late Marquis of Westminster in the matter of his great sire, for, when importuned by some American buyer to put a price on Touchstone, he asked them, so runs the tale, '*to value their United States.*' But, if absolute equine perfection is unattainable, the greatest approximation to that sublimated standard must be sought, and this we maintain the Irish hunter has already reached; else why do they find their way, not only all over the United Kingdom wherever 'a cry of hounds' may be heard, but even to Europe, America, and Africa?—and as yet the purchasers seem satisfied, and return, like Oliver Twist, to our markets 'for more.' Money, after all, in a commercial country, is the best test of value, and judged by that severe standard Irish hunters are still highly thought of. For instance, Mr. Wallace's Irish hunters at Leicester a few days ago made an average of 288*l.*, and the young lady who was wont to sigh out her soul in song for her Arab steed—'Oh, give me but my Arab steed!'—would in this *fin de siècle*, when nearly all smart spinsters are sports-women, much prefer an Irish bred and reared one.

With regard to Irish hunters pure and simple, Mr. Wrench's indictment seems quite unfounded. It may be conceded that, with the entire hunting world intent upon getting Irish hunters of high class, the difficulty of securing a good hunter in Ireland at a moderate price has increased immensely, and those wonderful bargains that we heard of a few decades ago have become scarcer and scarcer with each year; but the great purveyors to pursuers—such as Mr. James Daly, of Liffey Bank in Dublin; Mr. Edward Macdonald, of Ashtown, Phoenix Park; or Mr. T. Donovan, of Cork—will tell any inquirer that there is plenty of corn in Egypt, and lots of good horses to be had for their *good* customers still, and that, while well-bred hunters of size, scope, and substance, no longer, like violets, blush unseen or shed their fragrance on the desert air, they exist in numbers, and are bred pretty largely to meet the increased and still increasing demand from all points of the hunting compass. Nothing proves this enormous demand more than the pregnant fact that there are

probably twenty amateur and professional horse-dealers in Ireland at present for one that existed twenty-five years ago; while merely to take a single hunting association in Ireland—Meath, to wit—which has only taken strenuously to horse-culture lately, we may mention a few Meath hunters that are, in many cases, household words in England as well as Ireland: The Saint, The Sinner, Cloister, Come Away, The Rake, Royal Meath, Ulysses, Ilex, Foremans, Wild Man from Borneo, Dick, Cenobite, Why Not, Coronet, Gamecock, Ireland, Roman Oak, The Drummer, Carrollstown, and Greek Girl.

These names, jotted down from memory, hardly justify the conclusion that Irish hunters are degenerating, as they still hold their own over the chasing tracks of the world. Of the facility that existed some years ago for picking up a potential chaser in Ireland at a small price, we may mention how the late Lord Clanricarde bought, at the late Lord De Freyne's auction in Roscommon, a wiry, well-bred chestnut colt, whom, after some time, he transferred to Leicestershire, and found him a good, bold, resolute hunter, only so keen that, to subdue this exuberance of spirit, he took him into a big plough and galloped him round and round, till he found that this high-couraged chestnut was more likely to subdue than be subdued. In a few months this horse (Caustic) won the Conyngham Cup at Punchestown, and we heard the origin of his translation to the chasing stable from his Lordship there. Rory of the Hills, who, in the hands of Garrett Moore, could win welter races *à volonté*, was another lot picked up for a song from a struggling but sporting farmer; but examples of this sort are too common to quote, and we may pass on to a few more simple tests of the excellence of the Irish hunter. There are certain rampart-like fences and brooks that have hardly altered their characteristics for many decades. Such are the Laragh River in Kildare, the Lagore double, the Ballymaglasson mearing fence, the Bush Farm *passim*, and the Loch of Ballyhack. These, in old times, were treated with ceremonious respect by the majority of the Field, and great kudos was given to the successful negotiators. Now nearly every one rides at these obstacles, and in the majority of cases gets over them.

A few decades ago, in the Meath and Dublin country, a corps of wreckers maintained themselves by posting some of their body at the notoriously large fences that were likely to intervene in the course of the chase. The salvage varied from

a shilling to a sovereign, according to circumstances and the status of the overthrown sportsman. Now, these men or their descendants declare that hunters are for the most part so well trained to jump that their occupation is, like Othello's, gone, and they devote themselves to running messages and doing sporting 'chores.' An amusing tale is told of a gallant staff man in Dublin, now on the high road to a field-marshal's *bâton*. His hunter failed to clear one of these huge banks and fosses, and the gallant soldier was knocked out of breath and time, and slightly concussed withal. The wreckers sat on him and proceeded to loosen his collar and cravat, unbuttoned his coat, and came upon the rainbow hues of gorgeous undervests or waistcoat edgings worn by this still unconscious sportsman, till one of them exclaimed, 'Jabers, boys! this is no man, but a paycock!'

The Chase in Ireland received something of a check in the days of the Land League and agrarian agitation, but, Antæus-like, it has gained strength from the fall, and is based now on broader and stronger foundations than ever; for, whereas it was erst a patrician pastime, now it is a popular sport, as democratic and levelling as you please, though all the time the sport of kings.

Every year sees a new crop of well-bred four-year-olds learning their business in the hunting-fields of the country, and probably the best of these find their way across the Channel at high figures. The fluctuations in the cattle trade of late years have given a great impetus to horse-culture in Ireland, and probably at no one period in the history of the island have there been so many high-class hunters produced *as in the present lustrum*. These are the opinions of experts and men largely interested in the horse-trade, and, *pace* Mr. Commissioner Wrench, we share them. Now, what has given Irish hunters this supremacy of status? Something, no doubt, may be conceded to her shamrocky soil, with its limestone basis; something, too, to its mild, equable climate; but infinitely more to the good Eastern blood that came to Ireland from Spain and the Mediterranean, in exchange probably for cows, the currency of the island, for we read that Dermot MacMurrough came to the camp of our Richard II. mounted on a charger that had cost him four hundred cows, and the Norman knights were filled with wonder and admiration at the handy 'hobbies' that formed the Irish cavalry. Since then Arab blood has been poured freely into Ireland, and so far as we can ascertain the breed of

Irish horses has kept on improving, gaining increased size and substance without loss of quality.

Of course, with the immensely increased demand, all sorts of expedients were tried to combine size, bone, and substance for the market, and even a Clydesdale cross was permitted, but always with a thoroughbred sire. The result was not, in most cases, a happy combination: size and softness went together, and experiments of the kind were given up, though a few extraordinary exceptions, such as Tacitus, who ran so well at Punchestown last year, cropped up among the number of mistakes; for Tacitus is not only a fair chaser, but has the reputation of being a stout hunter, as the grandson of Hermit might be expected to prove. We are making Irish hunters our theme just now, but it may not be *malapropos* to mention that, among their patrician *pur sang* cousins, there are few animals in the kingdom of higher credentials than the Irish-bred Laodamia, Delpos, Baldcoote, and Orloff, and we mention them to show that horse-breeding shows no sign of declension in any department. We would, therefore, suggest that all the weight of evidence and opinion is against Mr. Commissioner Wrench. He may be compared to Athanasius, who maintained his orthodoxy against a heterodox and wrong-judging world—'*Athanasius contra mundum*.'

Mr. Wrench may possibly have based his argument (or assertion), as to the degeneracy of the Irish hunter, on the large sums that good, high-class hunters now fetch; but here we would venture to remark that since hunting became the fashion, hunters of quality and character were ever dear, such animals being always exceptional. Mr. Henry Nethercote, of Moulton Grange, in his very interesting account of the Pytchley Hunt, tells us of a custom that obtained among the members of that association in the fifties or sixties, to put up to auction after dinner any hunter who had greatly distinguished himself in the field, and that his father, Squire Nethercote, was bid six hundred guineas for a hunter of his, but declined the tempting offer, the owner being probably permitted to put his reserve on the animal.

Having said our say about Irish hunters and their general appreciation in the world of sport, an appreciation which seems to increase with enlarged facilities of transit, let us now consider Mr. Wrench's theories of improvement of the degenerate Hibernian hunter, who is not as good as he ought to be. These resolve themselves into—1st, the creation of a Hunter Stud-book; 2nd, the use of half-bred sires. Now, any one conversant with

the rank and file of Irish breeders knows very well that pedigrees are supposed to be like bridles or horse-clothing, easily adjustable to any horse, and to be selected with a view to the probabilities and the caprices of the buyer, and that, without an infinite amount of supervision, the scheme of registration would be in too many instances unreliable. There seems a consensus of opinion on this subject, and, as a matter of fact, there is an English Hunter Stud-book available for the purpose.

With regard to the use of half-bred sires in Ireland, many of whom have, as Mr. Wrench remarks, proved very useful in their districts, we would remark that there are half-breds and half-breds, and that in Ireland especially, owing to the allowances given to *cocktails*, many animals and families of the very bluest blood were kept out of the stud-book by their owners. Thus, Brunette, the typical chaser of her day, was a nominal cocktail, and so, also, to come to modern instances, is Come Away, who was good enough to win a Grand National on three legs. Mr. Cockin's horse, The Lawyer, who won Queen's Plates in Ireland, was a cocktail, though no horse that we can think of transmitted better gifts of stoutness and speed to his descendants. Fairy Land is another exemplar of the sort, and New Oswestry, Hesper, and May Boy belong to the same category, while Lord Hugh, who showed his quality at Punchestown a season or two ago, is one of the cocktail *peris* excluded from the Hippic peerage. In reality, these brilliant exceptions only prove the rule, that pure blood on one side is essential to crossing, for the animals named are good not because they are *half-bred*, but because they contain an infinitesimal portion of alloy, if any, in their composition. But blood, if an essential, is not everything for hunter sires; there must be make, shape, and fair action (not gaudy town knee action), and if performance on the chasing track or the turf be superadded, so much the better; but symmetrical levelness and balance, good bone and action, are indispensable, and these things are to be found among thoroughbred horses if sought for, nor need a thoroughbred be of ultra-fashionable stock to be a good, useful hunter sire, though soundness should be insisted on.

It is notorious that Irish farmers, unlike the astute Arabs, sold their well-bred, short-legged mares freely to foreigners, tempted by good prices, and the cry is, that only a poor residuum remains. We think this cry most exaggerated, looking at the thousands of good colts and fillies exported every

year from Irish ports ; but the laws of supply and demand are quite capable of checking the evil, and the Royal Dublin Society are doing good service in awarding prizes to three-year-old mares with foal at foot, and in giving cheap service of selected sires to approved mares, the property of tenant farmers throughout Ireland. In the matter of educating the public mind on the matter of horse-breeding, we think they have not succeeded. The sires awarded handsome prizes at their splendid August shows have, as a rule, very little hunting type about them, though they may have pretentious pedigrees, and hardly one of them could have carried fifteen stone to hounds (yet we are told like begets like), while we have seen malformed sires awarded *premia*. This should hardly be. In a paper of this kind, all we can do is to glance at the effect of the introduction of thoroughbred sires into Australia, America, and even the little island of Jamaica. The trotter comes of pure blood on one side, as the Americans will tell you, and in Argentina Mr. Kemmis, an Irishman, has managed to produce good, useful hunters from native mares by the aid of thoroughbred sires, such as Phoenix. India, to the Roman, meant or included Arabia, and what says Virgil, who has well described the modern hunter with prophetic vision—*India mittit Equos*.

The ventilation of Mr. Wrench's views on the subject of hunter-breeding in Ireland has, we think, done good, though he has few, if any, disciples. With regard to his Hungarian experiences, we may add that it has fallen to our lot to hunt a Hungarian ourselves ; but we think the best argument against Hungarian hunters is, that the Magyar noblemen who hunt in this country do not use them for the chase, while the Empress of Austria invariably rode *Irish hunters*, knowing their excellence.

No doubt Irish hunter-breeding is capable of vast improvement, but as Tommy Moore sang long ago,—

‘ But till they can show us some lovelier planet,
This earth is the best place for you, love, and me ;’

so we must be satisfied for the present with the indifferent Irish hunter. Would that we were good enough for even the average Irish hunter !

Many good judges think that Mr. Commissioner Wrench is doing great disservice to the congested districts of Western Ireland by introducing trotting cocktails there as sires, though he has neutralised the base strain by an Arab or two.

KIRBY GATE, 1893.

By CUTHBERT BRADLEY.

THE opening day of the present season with the Quorn at Kirby Gate, besides being one of the most splendid hunting pageants ever witnessed, will always stand out as the commencement of a fresh era in the history of fox-hunting, under the new Mastership of Hugh Cecil Lowther, fifth Earl of Lonsdale. Kirby Gate has been the time-honoured fixture of the Quorn during the past fifty years for the first Monday in November, and gives the opening note for the first blush of pink, the first gleam of snowy buckskin, and the commencement of another season's sport in the shires. The Quorn Hunt takes first rank amongst subscription packs, deriving most of its support from Melton Mowbray, the hunting metropolis of the world, and was brought into notoriety in 1753 by Mr. Hugo Meynell, a distinguished sportsman. Amongst the long rôle of Masters whose names are honoured and renowned in hunting history, they can claim Mr. Thomas Assheton Smith, as fine a sportsman as ever crossed a saddle; Lord Southampton; Sir Harry Goodricke; Sir Richard Sutton, who had the largest stud of hunters ever stabled at Quorn; the Earl of Stamford; Mr. S. W. Clewes, son-in-law to Sir Richard Sutton; Lord Hastings; Mr. Chaworth Musters, who had three huntsmen in his establishment besides himself—viz., Frank Gillard, who hunted the hounds in the high country; Bob Machin, late huntsman to the Rufford, who whipped-in to him; and John Goddard, who, after hunting the Quorn hounds and Mr. Tailby's, undertook the management of the stud at Quorn. Then came Mr. John Coupland, for fourteen seasons Master, the longest-enduring Mastership since Meynell. On Mr. Coupland's resignation, the hounds were bought by the Duke of Portland, Lord Wilton, and Mr. Behrens. Tom Firr was engaged to continue huntsman, and Lord Manners undertook the Mastership, to be followed by Captain Warner.

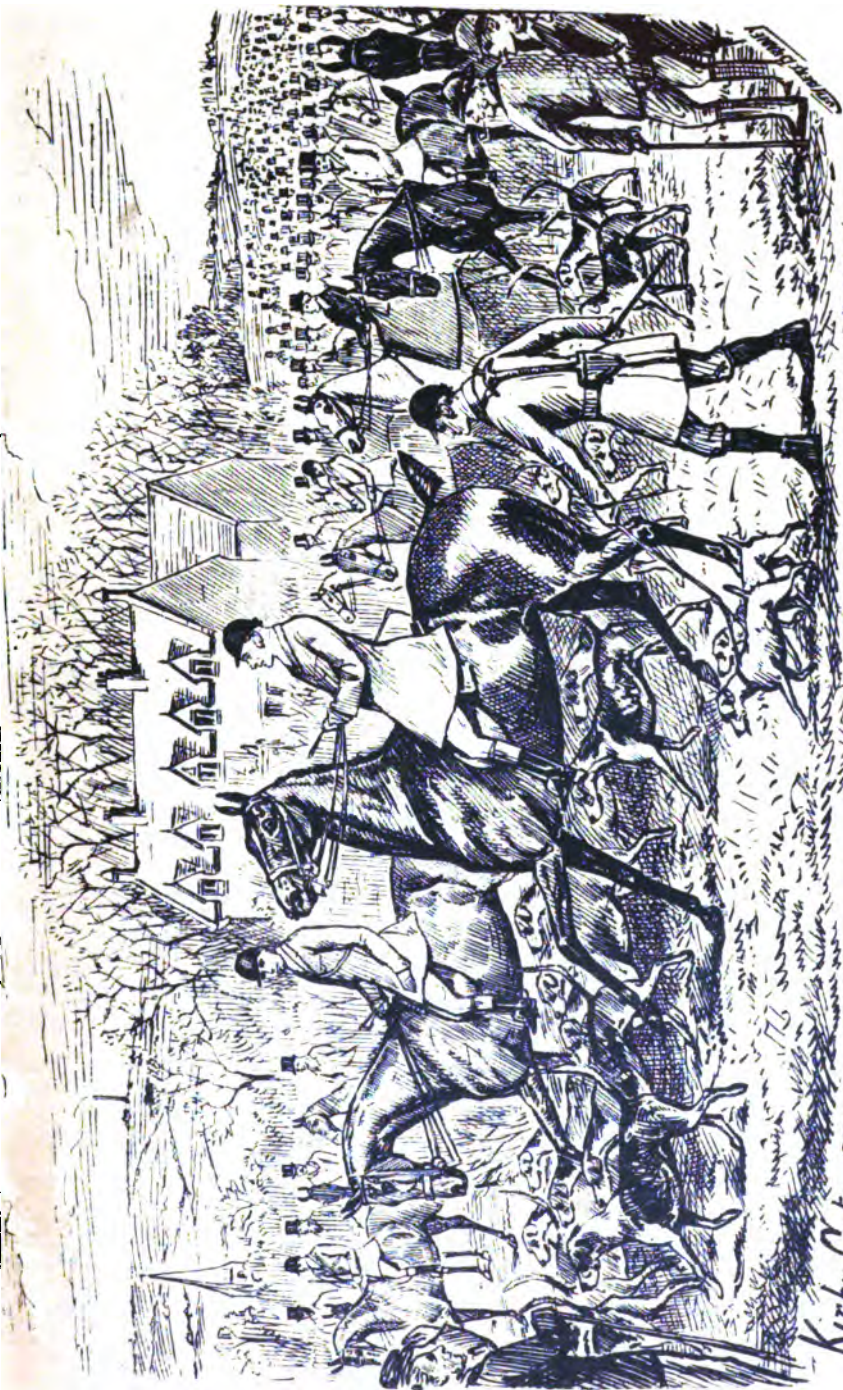
Lord Lonsdale undertakes the duties of Master at a most critical moment, when the very future of fox-hunting is threatened; but by his masterful action in the field and in his plan of campaign, he promises to solve many difficult problems for the good of the hunting community at large,

give fox-hunting a new lease of life, and revive the old glories of the Quorn. The conditions under which we carry on our sport have so changed during the last fifty years, that it is high time that we left the old beaten track and made new departures, if we hope to hand down our sport to the next generation. We think that hunting has more national efficacy than any other of our pastimes; that it does more to make Englishmen what they are, and to keep them as they are, extending its influences to very many of both sexes who do not hunt themselves; bringing together every rank and class in good fellowship; making a training-ground that develops and brings out the best qualities of a man.

The new Master of Quorn is bred right for sport, coming of a line of ancestors who have hunted the Cottésmore hounds for the past one hundred and fifty years, and at six-and-thirty is no novice in the duties of Master, having held the reins of office for the Blankney and North Pytchley Hunts. Nature has richly indued him with qualities that go to make a Master of the first rank—viz., determination, fixity of purpose, the gift of organization, approachability and popularity with all classes, a will of iron, a knowledge of all matters sporting, fine horsemanship, and a presence and position capable of coping with the largest field. With such a leader our sport will gain renewed strength and vitality, for Lord Lonsdale has entered on his duties with the greatest zest.

To make the history of so important an occasion complete, it will be necessary to hark back to a meeting of the Quorn Hunt at Leicester at the end of the previous season, when Lord Lonsdale made a speech that pretty clearly put forward the line of action he intended to take. The names of those present were: Lords Belper and Manners, Sir A. Palmer, Captain Warner, and Mr. W. B. Paget, the retiring Masters; Colonel Henry, Messrs. Nuttall, W. Miles, Cradock, Leadbitter, G. Blewitt, M. V. Story, W. J. Martin, Underwood, Ardron, Parr, V. S. Hamshaw, Wade, C. McNeill, Rolleston, A. V. Pryor, A. B. Markham, Hincks, E. M. Warner, Woodcock; and, to meet them, Lord Lonsdale and his brother, the Hon. Lancelot Lowther. The speech, as recorded in *The Diary of a Country Gentleman*, was as follows:—

‘MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—Before the resolution is put to the meeting, I should like to lay plainly before you my views as to the position and duties I am undertaking, that there may be no mistake



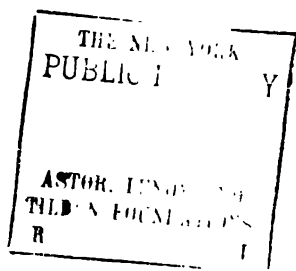
Kirby Gate 1893

TOM FISK

LORD LONSDALE

HARRY THE RUNNER

THE HON. L. & MRS. LONTHER



hereafter. I by no means place the actual fox-hunting as the first of such duties ; rather, that all consideration and consulting of their convenience be paid to landlords and cover-owners, equally to all tenants and occupiers of land. Subject to this, I will try by all means in my power to show you sport to my own satisfaction, which means to yours also, relying on you to help me in the difficulties which beset all Masters of Hounds in such a country as this. And to do this you must understand plainly that if I say a thing is to be done it will be done, and if it is not done I take the hounds home. The next thing I have to allude to is the subject of wire, and in this I ask your help particularly. I purpose to have prepared maps of the whole country on which will be marked every bit of wire that exists, and then divide the country into districts, in which will be appointed some one to get the wire down wherever it is possible, and I believe and hope that it is possible, such person being provided in each case with a map of his district with the wire marked on it. Another of the points on which I spoke to the committee is, that I am to be free to appoint a deputy to represent me ; it will naturally be my brother that I shall so appoint, but not necessarily. With regard to the subscription, it is, as agreed by the committee, to be raised from 2500*l.* to 3000*l.* My reason for asking this I should like to give. It is not for my own present requirements, but in view of possible eventualities. If the Cottesmore became vacant, and if the country were offered to me, it is but natural that I should prefer to take the country which my family have hunted for 150 years. I am not assuming in any way that this will be so, but in the event of its happening, with this increased subscription, I should be able to continue my brother in the Mastership of the Quorn, if it were your pleasure that he should do so.'

Another very desirable step taken by the new Master was the issue of a manifesto addressed to hunting men on the subject of the behaviour of their second horsemen, a very large item of a Leicestershire field, who often incur the ire of the farmers. The following is a copy of the circular issued :—

'QUORN, *November, 1893.*

'DEAR SIR,—As the regular hunting season has now commenced under, I regret to say, probably the most trying conditions to farmers since 1838, I feel bound, in the interests of the owners and occupiers of land, without whose goodwill and long-suffering hunting could not continue, and as Master of the Quorn Hounds, to point out an obvious way by which we can lessen the heavy tax we exact from those whose land we ride over. I refer to the management of the great and increasing body of "second horsemen," whose presence and present mode of performing their duties are more distasteful to the farmers than any other feature of hunting. This at least is the result of my experience, and of many conversations with the farmers. The remedy is to a certain extent

in our own hands, and I purpose to apply it, feeling sure that in doing so I shall have the assistance and the co-operation of all those who have the welfare of the sport at heart. I should be glad if gentlemen hunting with these hounds would give their "second horsemen" general orders to ride with the hunt second horsemen, and particular instructions against pulling down or jumping any fence; also that on all occasions the last man through is to shut and hasp the gates, and that they use only right of way and high roads going to cover or returning home. I am well aware that at times these regulations will be inconvenient, but it is in the interests of the future as well as of the present of our sport that I ask your assistance to carry them out, feeling convinced that by so doing we shall show the owners and occupiers of land, whom the bad times alone prevent from sharing in a sport as dear to them as it is to us, that we are ready and willing to avoid all unnecessary damage.

‘Yours truly, LONSDALE.’

During the summer months the new Master was very busy studying the lay of his country, and getting to know the dwellers on the soil and the owners of coverts. The result of this was the issue of a list of persons of whom provender can be obtained in the Quorn country and neighbourhood. Two sheets weekly of the *Melton Mowbray Times and Loughborough Advertiser* were filled with 240 names and addresses of vendors in the first column; in the second, the description of provender: hay, straw, oats, beans, bran, malt, carrots, sawdust, tan, &c.; in the third column, the quantity; and in the fourth, remarks as to quality of each article. This list appeared weekly throughout the season, being carefully revised from time to time, and is quite an original idea of Lord Lonsdale's. The probable result is that a good deal of acceptable money found its way into the farmer's pocket direct, instead of his having to take a worse price from the corn-dealers; and there is no gainsaying the fact that hunting brings enormous benefits in its train, as a set-off against whatever slight losses may be sustained. As an example, I might mention the price of hunter-hay this season, and one order for the Hunt stables was a hundred tons of hay, for which was paid 1000*l*. The kennels, also, were overhauled and refitted, and the staff increased, and in the Hunt stables over a hundred horses were got together for the use of the Master, his brother, and the Hunt staff. Under the personal supervision of Lord Lonsdale no detail was omitted, however trivial, that was likely to ensure success.

Tom Firr carried the horn, and started his twenty-third season as Huntsman to the Quorn, a long record of triumphs

that go to place him amongst the first rank of his profession. Captain Percy Williams' advice to Tom Firr when he was promoted was : 'Stay at home with your hounds, and wear a white neckcloth ;' and he also added : 'Keep your temper, and stick to the line,' which is the best advice ever given to a huntsman. In the cubbing season Firr took a heavy fall, and broke his nose in two places : Lord Lonsdale possesses a knowledge of surgery amongst his many accomplishments, and set it for him there and then, so that he appeared on the scene at Kirby Gate showing little or nothing of his recent accident.

The eve before Kirby Gate, which was to mark the formal opening of Lord Lonsdale's Mastership [of the Quorn, and the season 1893-94, a hundred or more postcards were sent out to the dwellers in the country about Gartree Hill, warning them that hounds would depart from the old-established rule of drawing that covert for their first fox, owing to a death in the family of the owner of the covert, Miss Hartopp. Nevertheless, a large crowd did assemble on the hillside, to spend a day of watching and disappointment, for the Hunt never went that way.

Two nights of very sharp frost and a keen piercing wind added to the hardness of the ground from the long drought, making the prospect of the state of the going for the opening day none of the best. The sun shining brightly by ten o'clock banished the frost, and made it a perfect day from a pictorial point of view ; a good day to see and hear, and show off the pageantry of the chase.

Kirby Gate is a quaint old house, standing inside the park, and at one time was used as a hunting-box by Sir Francis Burdett. The crowd that assembled there was, without doubt, the largest on record at any previous opening day ; the roads were blocked with every description of vehicle, from the four-horse pleasure van from Leicester to her ladyship's neat pony cart from Melton. All sorts and conditions of people on wheels and on foot ; one vast crowd who regard the occasion as a general holiday, and on whose goodwill and love of a hunt our sport depends more than we know. With an army of over 500 people in the saddle, we indeed went to make a gallant show to inaugurate another season's sport, and so popularise fox-hunting. Of the show on Kirby Gate day, Brooksby, the prince of authorities on all matters sporting, has written of a former occasion : 'The gathering is attractive as a show, amply evinced

by the regularity with which it is brought to do duty as an annual picnic for Leicester and the country round. So, besides their doing what is right by themselves and comrades in bringing their talents to bear upon the toilet of the day, the brave gentlemen who take part in the pageant are really performing a public duty, viz., popularising fox-hunting, and maintaining its place in public esteem. What would the Lord Mayor be but for the Lord Mayor's Show? Why is the sway of an Indian prince, however cruel and tyrannical, always far more popular with the multitude than the cold, even justice of the British rule? Simply on account of the glitter and show ever associated with the presence of an Eastern potentate. In like manner the gay colouring and bright surroundings of fox-hunting do quite as much towards keeping it in favour as any of the more sterling advantages it can boast, or even the claims of old custom can urge. The whole country-side delight in viewing the passing pageantry of the chase, and its brilliantly clad votaries are welcomed everywhere. A farmer will take pride and pleasure in the passage of the gay throng across his land, who would give anything but a cordial welcome to a bevy of riders merely loosing off their superfluous energy over his farm.'

A snow-shower, a beautiful rainbow, and a horse with a fit of the naughties, who set his rider on the floor, entertained the crowd until hounds arrived. A little before eleven the yellow hound-van drove up, drawn by three horses, unicorn fashion, with a boy riding the leader. Tom Firr, with his whips, A. Earp and T. Parker, were on the top, the lady pack of twenty couple inside, and Lord Lonsdale arrived on a galloping hack. The hunt staff of eight, in uniform, mounted hog-maned steeple-chasers with long tails, but not so much as a wisp of mane to any one of them. No one could help being struck with the amount of care and thought that had been bestowed on the smallest detail to make everything as good as it was possible to make it. The servants were splendidly mounted; their clothes fitted to perfection; the scarlets were a workmanlike shade of pink, leathered as to the legs, hung with swan-necked spur; the bridles all had wide nose-bands and big ring snaffles; each servant wore a new stirrup leather, all carried chains and whistles in outside breast pockets, and the hunt second horsemen were provided with leather cases containing wire, thread, needles, lotion, bandages, old brandy, and every appliance necessary in the emergency of an accident to man or horse.

Punctually at eleven the new Lord and Master of the Quorn mounted his hunter, a dark-brown horse full of quality, up to 15 stone, and after greeting the fathers and pillars of the Hunt, led the way to Welby Osier Bed. An account of Kirby Gate Day, without giving a list of those there, or reported to be there, would be incomplete, because the first question asked always is, 'Who was there?' Eight Masters of Hounds, past and present, in the field — Lords Lonsdale, Manners, Chesham, the Hon. Lancelot Lowther, Captains Warner and Peacock, Messrs. Tailby and Fernie. From the Belvoir, Frank Gillard, his first Kirby Gate Day since he was huntsman to the Quorn three-and-twenty seasons ago; 'The Lad,' Colonel the Hon. H. H. Forester, the oldest Meltonian; the Hon. Mrs. Lancelot Lowther, riding a good-looking grey horse, also Miss Sybil Lowther; Earl and Countess of Huntingdon, Earl and Countess Morton, Mr. A. V. Pryor, the Countess of Cardigan, the Marquis of Cholmondeley, Sir Thomas Brooks, Sir Robert and Lady Affleck, Sir Pattison Nickalls, Lord Daventry, Lady Gerard, Mr. Cecil and Lady Augusta Fane, Mr. C. and Lady Hilda McNeil, Lord and Lady Henry Bentinck, Lady E. Wickham, Lord Crawshaw, Lord Rocksavage, Sir F. and Miss Fowke, the Right Hon. A. Staveley Hill, M.P., Baron de Teyll, Mr. Algernon and Lady Turner, the Hon. Alan and Mrs. Pennington, the Hon. H. H. and Mrs. Molyneux, the Hon. Henry Bourke, Major and the Hon. Mrs. Candy, Mr. and Mrs. James Hornsby, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Phillips, Sir Bache Cunard, General Chippendale, Count Zbrowski, Lady Alice Portal, Miss Margot Tennant, Miss Wilson (from the Holderness), Colonel Paget Moseley, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Bowden, Mr. H. Bowden, Mr. and Mrs. E. Long, Mr. and Miss Hodgson, Mr. Hemery, Mrs. Sloane Stanley, Mr. and Mrs. E. Baldock, Mr. and Mrs. Brocklehurst, Captain and Miss Ashton, Mr. Arthur Coventry, Mr. Henry Custance, Major Powell, Mr. B. B. and Miss Muir, Mr. N. Fenwick, Mr. Farquhar, Mr. Malcolm, Mr. Grenfell, Mr. H. B. Praed, Mr. Peake, Mr. and Mrs. Lucas, Mr. B. Lubbock, Mr. Parker, Mr. and the Misses Chaplin, Mr. A. L. Duncan, Mr. and Mrs. Hillyard, Mr. J. B. Cradock, Captain Burns, Captain Boyce, Captain Curzon, Captain Murray Smith, Captain King King, Captain and Mrs. Williams, Captain and Mrs. Palmer, Captain Harrison, Captain Burnaby, Captain Hugh Owen, Captain Little, Lord Annaly, Captain Pennell-Elmhirst, Mr. W. J. Martin, Mr. Otho Paget, Mr. Travis, Mr. Miles, Mr. A. R. Markham and the Misses Markham, Mr.

Wade, Mr. Hames, Mr. Trew, Mr. and Mrs. Lawson, Mr. and Mrs. Younger, Mr. and Mrs. De Winton, Mr. H. T. Barclay, Mr. Rose, and the Rev. J. P. Seabrooke. But these are only a tithe of the names of those present.

We wound our way across the landscape, a long, serpentine procession, with a tail over a mile long, and in the crowded gateways I never saw a more liberal display of heels, jostling and crushing, nor heard more fault-finding, grumbling, and unchristianlike thoughts given expression to in strange languages. Those nearest to the Master were well taken care of, and a cordon of hunt servants round the pack prevented hounds being pressed upon. On the way, Lord Lonsdale asserted his authority, and showed us that he meant to be Master in reality. To escape the crowd in the gateways one or two leapt over the fence at the side, and in a moment the Master swooped down, and, pulling his horse across them, thundered forth, 'Ware seeds, sir! Don't you know seeds, sir?'

On the hill above Welby Fishponds, we were pulled up a field away from covert, and no one was allowed to go on whilst hounds were drawing for their fox. A pretty covert it is to see drawn, good fox-ground lying on the side of a hill, and soon the joyful chorus of hounds proclaimed a find. On the top side of covert came the sound of the shrill whistle from the whipper-in, as he viewed the fox away. 'Gone away' on the whistle, there was no halloaing: Colonel J. Anstruther Thompson always used a whistle when he hunted hounds in Fifeshire, and so does Lord Worcester, to save the voice; moreover, some are of opinion that the sound of a whistle has less risk than that of the voice in making a fox head back to cover.

Firr had his hounds quickly out of covert and laid on, streaking away across the ploughs with a line for Grimstone Gorse. Down the hillside to the ride-gate we poured, a perfect avalanche of horse-people, slipping and slithering as we went from the greasy state of the foothold. Once through the covert, we spread out to gallop and jump, and loose horses were soon careering across the landscape, for the sun was bright and trying, fences blind, dykes foul, horses madly fresh, our new clothes tight and our seats loose.

Sunshine and cold winds made scent very catchy, so that hounds could only run by fits and starts, and at last they marked their fox to ground. A second fox was forthcoming in Lord Aylesford's plantation, going away for Shobey Scholes,

and was slowly hunted round by Grimstone Gorse again. As the big body of horse-people spread out over the country, like a comet appeared the piebald horse with the long tail, more conspicuous than a grey horse on a woodland day.

There is generally a bad accident on the opening day, amongst such a crowd of horse-people, and this happened to Mrs. Long, from the Belvoir country, riding a grey pony, who swerved at a fence, and the ditch on the far side caught him. Lord Lonsdale was the first off his horse to render assistance. Fortunately, a doctor, Mr. Powell, was close at hand, and a carriage to take her back to Melton. As luck would have it, Mrs. Long was wearing a tall hat, which, although concertinaed by the fall, undoubtedly averted very serious consequences, and her Heathcote safety skirt allowed her to get clear of the saddle at once.

By the time the hounds marked their fox to ground, in a drain between Old Dalby Wood and Six Hills, there were a good many dirty coats, and we pulled up, a hot, thirsty throng, to enjoy our lunch. The Master dismounted, Firr drew his hounds away, and the first whipper-in took a survey and sniff at the drain, and then appeared on the scene the new appendage to the Hunt staff, viz., Harry the runner, in hunt cap and scarlet coat. In couples he had a brace of wire-haired terriers, whilst strapped to his back was a sapper's spade and pick. A terrier went to ground, and Harry in his shirt-sleeves was soon using the Lonsdale patent spade to some purpose, its sharp blade of steel cutting through everything, down into the drain. The whipper-in was able to draw the fox by his brush, and wriggling like an eel, at arm's length, he flung him away. The pack coursed him for a field, rolled him over in the open, and shrill 'who-whoops' rang out over the first fox of the season.

As the hounds moved away to Walton Thorns for their afternoon fox, the crowd of the morning melted away, making the chance of a good gallop more possible. A miniature yellow hound-van, pony-size, was in readiness at a half-way house to convey a couple or so of lame hounds back to kennels. From Walton Thorns we had the best thing of the day—a big ring over a stiff country round by Burton-on-Wold to Prestwold, where our fox found harbourage underground, near to Mr. Hussey Packe's house. A capital hunting run, the pace being fairly good all through, and the fences big enough for the keenest. Dirty coats there were in abundance, one hard rider

taking five falls ; Lady Gerard and Mrs. De Winton being amongst those who registered a fall.

Who shall say that the season 1893-94 was not ushered in at Kirby Gate by a pageant worthy of the occasion, that must have gone far to remove from the minds of the masses the idea that the love of sport is on the wane, or will not last beyond our time ! Lord Lonsdale dispels such forebodings, and gives our sport a new lease of life.

THE END OF THE CHAPTER.

By C. G. PAPILLON.

ELL, of all the jaded corks ! Did you ever see such hocks ?
And those shaky fore-legs show a recent fall.
No, it's not a case of buying—why, she isn't worth the trying !
And she's fitter for the kennels than the stall.'

So I heard him lightly say ; then he turned and went away,
And he left the dealer's crowded, busy yard.
If perhaps he'd known my story, he'd have thought I well might glory
In a brilliant past, that time had never marred.

Ah ! though now I'm old and slack, and a dealer's wretched hack,
Years ago I was a clinker hard to beat—
A slashing, clean-bred filly, nigh as fast as ' Puffing Billy,'
And my jumping was a veritable feat.

You may quiz me, and abuse all the other worn-out screws,
And declare that I'm the worst of all the string ;
But the sporting card, who bought me as a likely yearling, thought me
Thrown away at eighty guineas in the ring.

I was tried, at three years old, to display the green and gold
Of my owner, who declared I'd win a race ;
And with several winks and nods, he secured the market odds,
For he knew that I was bred to go the pace.

In a well-known Autumn Cup, with the light-weight, Fordham, up—
When I made my first appearance at the post,
There were horses at the meeting, who would want a lot of beating ;
But my trainer held his peace, and wouldn't boast.

There was one from Porter's stable who, the touts declared, was able
To make slugs of every flyer in the race :
Though he sounded good on paper (and he cut a pretty caper
When we *started*), still, he couldn't last the pace.



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R L

Then another little horse showed a liking for the course,
By having won two races there before ;
But he had a crushing weight, and I thought, 'At any rate
He will find he has a trying race in store.'

'Do you think we'll do it, Day ?' I could hear my owner say,
'For this rush upon the favourite makes me fear.
Why on earth has he been sent? I was told he wasn't meant ;
But you cannot credit everything you hear.'

'They've forestalled the price, I think,' said my trainer, with a wink ;
'There's a brown colt I'm a bit afraid of, though ;
He is run by Alec Taylor, and a dark horse, and a nailer—
So I hear from one or two who ought to know.'

Thus the paddock gossip flowed, and some nervousness I showed.
'Keep her cool, boy !' I could hear my trainer call.
Said the lad to me : 'My beauty ! understand it is your duty
To secure the Cup, and land us each a haul.'

I was close beside the brown, when the starter's flag went down,
And we jumped away together as it fell.
Fordham got me next the railings, for, with doubtless many failings,
I was quick enough, and handy too, as well.

Just behind me, on the right, was Fred Barrett, sitting tight ;
Next him Mornie Cannon, waiting for the end ;
As we raced along together, it was just a toss up whether
I could keep my place until we turned the bend.

I was going strong and well, and the crowd began to yell,
As I thundered past the favourite up the straight.
The top-weight's chance was over ; and though Barrett flogged and
drove her,
It was clear *his* mount would share the loser's fate.

Little Wall, upon the brown, shot like lightning past, hands down,
And the Manton white and light blue took the lead ;
But my clever light-weight crack kept his head, and held me back,
And he nursed the strength he knew that I should need.

There's a roar of yells and shouts, and my backers have their doubts :
'The Manton colt will win ! The race is lost,—
For the colt's in better training ! No—the green and gold is gaining !'
And I caught him, and I beat him on the post.

Thus my maiden race was run, and the Autumn Cup was won,
And the losers came to grumble and to stare ;
But the sporting stable-boy nearly throttled me for joy :
'Fifty sovereigns in my pocket, little mare !'

Well, the pity of the thing was that, early in the spring,
I was overtrained for quite a little race ;
And I broke down altogether, and the vet. half doubted whether
Mine was not a long and almost hopeless case.

So I figured in the sale, and was bought upon the nail
By a wealthy M.F.H., whose eye I caught.
'She has splendid jumping quarters ! I shall keep her for my daughters,
If she shows that she can give us any sport.'

I recovered from the strain, and by June had come again,
And was taught to jump whatever came to hand ;
So that by the hunting season, my new master said, with reason,
'She will carry both my daughters, as I planned.'

Ah ! those happy days of yore ! I was always to the fore,
And I hunted with the cream of English packs.
Bank or bullfinch, rail or river—nought could stop or baulk me ever,
And my pace made all the other horses—hacks.

But those glorious years are past—far too good, perhaps, to last—
And a fatal fall reversed my happy lot ;
In a well-known hunting shire, I was cut to bits by wire,
And my rider, too, was killed upon the spot

Did I think that never more I should gallop as before,
On the turf, and in the copse, and through the vale ?
I was purchased by a dealer—and to drag an old four-wheeler
Was my wretched fate. So ends my sorry tale.

I am thin and very old, and I shiver with the cold—
But I know that now my days are almost past.
I shall live a little longer, growing weaker—never stronger—
And the knacker's yard will end my woes at last.

KILLING A CATAMOUNT.

By J. HARRINGTON KEENE.

IT was a fine sparkling morning in November, 1881, when the swift team of Farmer Walker brought the startling news into the little village of Brainard, Vermont, that a huge catamount or panther, alias mountain lion, had carried off one of the farmer's sheep during the night, and that its trail was very visible in the snow toward a cave in the Deep Cañon. This had been done early in the morning before daybreak, and the probabilities were that the

beast had carried the sheep to its lair, and after devouring it to repletion was now probably sleeping off the effects of its repast. All the village was roused instantly. Men did not stop to finish their morning meal, and even the women gathered round Farmer Walker along with their brothers and husbands to hear the particulars. It was only as recently as the Spring of the year that Rob McGilray had been severely bitten by a monster panther, that sprang out of the darkness of a great maple-tree upon him and crunched his shoulder as he strove to beat it off, then darting away and vanishing in the twilight of the evening as swiftly as it came. This time there was a chance to slay the beast, for it must have been—it was argued—hard driven by hunger to enter an enclosure and take the sheep.

‘And, by gol! he’s a durned sight bigger than the sheep, ef his tracks argifies anythin’,’ said Farmer Walker. ‘The gals and me misured ther prints agin ther hosse’s, and they was done gone more’n twict as big. Thez prints ware he hev jumped onto ther wood pile twenty feet apart. Say now, boys, thet tarnation critter’s got ter be killed, and I’m going ter give ther feller has does it five dollars and his skin as bust full as a roasted peanut er hard cider, not ter mention a leetle drap er old rye in it ter sorter keep it furm griping. Gimme a chew er terbacker, somebody,’ and, as the long slab-sided son of Vermont bit off a chunk of ‘hard’ as big as an apple from a cake handed to him in sympathetic response, there was a murmur of assent amongst the assembled crowd.

‘Them as means bizness,’ he continued presently, ‘hev got ter git right along and sling up ther shooting-irons, and I’ll take two in the buggy. You, Josh Martin, and you, Hi Eggerston, get yer we’pons and come on. T’others kin foller as ther a mindt to. We goin’ fer blood, hey, boys? Whoop!’ and the farmer raised a mighty Indian war-cry, which sounded ugly enough at this time. Heaven knows what horror it engendered in the ears of the early settlers!

In a quarter of an hour there were five buggies occupied by men armed either with the deadly Winchester or Remington rifle, and ready to exterminate forty American lions in spirit. For the soul of Nimrod dwells in these hardy Green Mountain boys and will not depart. It is even told of a company of them on a forced march during the War of the Rebellion, that tired, thirsty, and spent as they were, all at once they broke line and scampered, yelling like pandemonium let loose, after a hare that

started at their approach. They were ever renowned as the most reckless and ill-disciplined of troops on the march, but in action steady to the death, relentless and unswerving. They would drop side by side, but were never known to retreat.

To return, however, to my narrative. An hour later saw about a dozen well-armed men in Farmer Walker's barn partaking of a large glass each of what is euphemistically termed hereabouts 'stone fence,' and being interpreted means cider and whiskey. This business dispatched, inspection was made of the scene of the outrage, and the tale this told with bloody evidences all around was one easily read. The trail of the retreating creature was also plainly visible, and it was clear that it was of enormous size, from the expanse of the footprints and the certainty that the sheep must have been carried—for there were no indications at all of its having been dragged.

A word here anent the personality of the American lion or catamount may not be out of place. Its general appearance is not dissimilar to that of the lioness of the African species, and its average weight is seldom over one hundred pounds. In rare cases, however, it has been known to reach double that amount, and is then a formidable antagonist at close quarters. Indeed, it is formidable no matter what its size, for its first impulse when it is hit, whether mortally wounded or not, is to spring forward on its foe, and old hunters will tell you that its death-grip of jaw bites through everything till the teeth meet, and then it requires enormous force to prize open the vice-like hold. Like the American Indian 'they is pizen wherever you meet 'em,' as poor Artemus Ward would say, and are being therefore rapidly improved off the face of the earth. The bound of the catamount is the most wonderful of feats. Twenty-five feet slantwise in height has been recorded as its greatest leap from the ground. Its usual prey is the grey hare, a creature not unlike a large, white, rough-haired rabbit, but having all the habits of the hare species. These form its ordinary diet, but an occasional lamb in the season, and, as we have seen, sometimes a full-grown sheep, would fall a victim to the rapacious beast.

Josh Martin and Hi Eggerston took the lead of the party. Josh was an ideal backwoodsman. He stood six feet two inches in his stockinged feet, and was all bone apparently; his long lantern jaws bore a grizzly beard, and his hair straggled down over his coat collar some inches; but his eye, dark and piercing, relieved the rest of his uncouth appearance. Josh was the

keenest bee-hunter and the deepest learned in woodcraft for many miles round, and by tacit consent the direction of the party was left in his hands. Hi Eggerston was a man of a different stamp. Rather bulky, but active as a squirrel, a dead shot, and possessed by an ardour which knew not the meaning of personal fear, he was just the man to lead a forlorn hope in battle had such an opportunity occurred. All felt assured of some definite issue to the expedition, and the fact that the trail was fresh and easily followed excited their feelings almost to intoxication. The fox-hunter and the fisherman have both periods of mental exaltation, but it is to the pusuer of wild beasts that the *vinum dæmonum* of the chase comes richest and most stimulating.

They soon moved on the track of the panther towards the Deep Cañon, each rifle ready for use, every ear attentive to the least sound, and every eye quick glancing on either side. A mile and a half through the comparatively open woodland, with its great balsams and birches, maples and oaks, was traversed, and still the tracks were pointing towards the natural cave known as Marble Cavern, which had been worked in years gone by for the splendid white marble it contained. Presently the cavity came in sight and still the trail led on, dashed with gouts of blood. At about a hundred and fifty yards from its entrance Josh cried a halt.

'It's dodgasted plain to me, boys,' said he, 'that this yer creeter is cornered. He's right in thar, and who's going in ter fetch him eout, say?'

'I will!' 'Let me!' 'I ain't scared, lemme go!' was the shout on every side.

'Not by a durn sight,' said Josh; 'me and Hi's got to tree this yer coon, and you boys got ter look on and shoot squirrels, I guess. Say, boys,' he added in a serious tone, 'Hi and me's goin' in to stir him up and you look eout. If ary one of yer gits a shot, don't yer forget that my pants is about his colour, and be sure yer draws a bead jest behind her; aim afore you let drive.'

Both Hiram Eggerston and Josh now advanced fearlessly, but with caution, to the opening of the cave, rifles cocked and nerves braced like iron. It was a proceeding of extreme danger, but the hardy mountain boys never thought of that. Right to the entrance they approached, and still no sight of their leonine quarry, but the indications of its presence in the torn wool and

splashes of blood were plentiful to their keen eyesight. At the threshold of the gloomy, vault-like cavern, Josh paused and peered carefully into the gloom. Nothing was to be seen. Warily stepping and creeping close to the sides, leaving ample space for the outward egress of the brute, they slowly began to explore the vestibule of the cave—no signs.

'Guess he's another half a mile in, Josh,' said Hi impatiently (the cave pierced the mountain several hundred yards); 'so let us get on a leetle faster,' and he stepped into the gloom boldly.

At that moment Josh caught sight of the blue glare of the creature's eyeballs not ten yards off, and he clutched his companion by the shoulder as he exclaimed in a deep whisper, 'There she is, by thunder! Look out! Draw a bead a-twixt they eyes and I'll go fer her heart.'

In a second the rifles were raised, and in another a double report rang out in a deafening report.

'Missed, by G——!' shouted Josh, as with a terrific leap the brute, whose outline they had not yet seen, sprang past them, but so near as to brush past Josh in the darkness.

'Look out, boys!' he yelled frantically, leaping from the precincts of the cave. 'Let her have it!'

'Bang! bang! bang!' sang out the Winchesters, and then came a pause and a shout. 'She's gone away, by thunder!'

Hi Eggerston did not pause to think. The panther had leapt sharp off to the left amongst the thicket of a tamerack swamp, and in a moment he was amongst it and disappeared. The rest of the party, headed by Martin, closed round and prepared to follow his example, when a loud cry of human pain was heard. On dashed Josh and the rest, and then silence was fearfully broken by another loud cry. They could not mistake its import, but where it came from it seemed impossible to find out, and the few minutes necessary to discover the trail of both man and beast seemed an eternity.

'Follie me, boys!' at last cried Josh, and just then a pistol shot showed the exact locality of the shooter, and a faint 'Whoo-oo!' told all that he was not 'done clean chawed up by that blessed catamount,' as old Josh afterwards remarked, and there lay two of them—the catamount and Hi; the latter with a lacerated shoulder, from which the clothing and skin hung in picturesque strips, covered in blood, and in a dead faint, 'caused by havin' about too much meat on him,' as Josh said afterward.

And the animal he sought : limp and dead, though graceful yet in its pose, though 'deader en ther mutton he'd het,' as we were subsequently informed by Martin. It had received four shots, but the last from his revolver killed it.

* * * * *

Hiram Eggerston and the panther were the heroes of the hour, and like all important persons, from professional beauties to water-fleas, were duly photographed. In front of me as I write lies a large portrait of both with the legend :

'American Lion, killed by H. Eggerston, 24 November, 1882, at Marble Cave, Vt; length 7 feet, weight 182 lbs.'

P.S.—Need I add that Hi took the five dollars from Farmer Walker, and duly drank his fill of 'stone fence' like a good citizen of this great country. What less could so great a hunter do?

A CHALK JOCKEY.

By FINCH MASON.

MR. THOMAS TOOVEY, the well-known and highly respected Newmarket trainer, was, for once in his life, in a dilemma—a real, genuine dilemma. A three-year-old colt of his own, named Mulligatawny, by Indian Chief—Brunette, had not only got into the Cesarewitch with the feather-weight of 5 st. 7 lb., but, better still, in a rough-up with two stable companions had come through the ordeal with such flying colours as to convince the trainer that, bar accidents, the race in question was the greatest certainty on earth for him. There was only one obstacle in the way, absolutely only one, and how to overcome that obstacle was puzzling the 'Quaker,' or rather Tom Toovey, most dreadfully. *He couldn't get a boy to ride him at the weight, or anything like it.*

There were only two or three light-weight jockeys of any repute at all who could manage it, and they were all engaged long ago.

The Léger was over, and the time was drawing near, and not a blow struck.

As Tom Toovey, sitting on his grey pony in the early morning, watched Mulligatawny going like great guns, and thought of the tempting odds to be had about him, and how

easy it would be to back the colt to win fifty or sixty thousand pounds with a comparatively small outlay, it made him feel quite sick, really downright ill.

It wanted just a month to the race, when one fine afternoon the trainer, mounting his hack, rode off to pay a visit to a farmer friend of his living about five miles from Newmarket, with a view to the purchase of some old hay.

The farmer was standing at his front door as his friend rode up, and at once noticed that 'summat was wrong,' as he expressed it. 'Whoy, Tom, lad,' he exclaimed, as he shook the trainer by the hand in his usual hearty fashion, 'whatever's the matter wi' ye? Are the hosses ill, or baint you well yourself? Come in, man, and tell us all about it over a bottle of the old poort wine.' And a lad coming running up at this juncture, in answer to a stentorian call from the farmer, Tom Toovey handed over his hack to him, followed his host into the house, and in five minutes' time was unburdening himself of his tale of woe to his sympathising friend in the best parlour, over a bottle of the famous old port.

The wine was so good, and his trouble laid so heavy on his chest, as he graphically put it, that Tom Toovey, though a temperate man as a rule, especially in the daytime, did not so much as raise a finger in remonstrance when his jolly host announced his intention of ordering up another bottle, and on its arrival assisted at its demolition with all the pleasure in life, the more so that with each glass of the ruby liquid he seemed to view things from a rosier point of view. A glass of brown brandy to 'top up' with, as his host expressed it, put the finishing touch to everything, and when at last he ordered his hack round, Tom Toovey felt quite himself again and amicably disposed to all the world.

'Your pony's at the door, please, sir,' announced the farmer's trim maidservant, opening the door.

So just a thimbleful more of the brown brandy—'It's as mild as milk, and won't do you a bit o' harm,' his host declared—and the trainer, drawing on his dogskin gloves, made a move on somewhat an unsteady pair of legs, and with a very flushed countenance, for the front door.

The redoubtable grey hack, so well known to all frequenters of Newmarket Heath, was outside, and the trainer gathering up his reins was just going to hoist himself into the saddle, when he suddenly paused in the act of putting his foot into the stirrup

and stood regarding earnestly the boy who stood at the pony's head. A very diminutive boy he was in a smock frock, with a very large head and a round, rosy face, quite like a miniature John Barleycorn, in fact, in appearance.

'He's a little 'un, ain't he?' observed the farmer.

'He is so,' replied the trainer; adding, 'If he could only ride, now, what a light-weight he would make, to be sure!'

'Oh, he's a good 'un to ride, I can tell you,' said his host; 'he's rather too fond of it, the young varmint, if the truth must be told. I gave him a good dose of strap oil only the day before yesterday, for jumping my bay mare over the rickyard fence. Didn't I, Billy?'

'Yes, zur,' replied Billy, grinning from ear to ear.

'Then all I can say is that it was a d——d shame of you, George,' said the trainer. 'Look here,' he went on, 'I'll make a horseman of that boy, you see if I don't—if you'll part with him, that is to say. To look at, he can't be more than five stone, if so much. Why, he's cut out for a jockey, and, if he only shapes well, he'll win the Cesarewitch in a month from this, as sure as eggs are eggs.'

'Oh, you're welcome to him, if the lad cares to go,' replied the farmer. 'Would you like to go along with this gentleman, and learn to be a jockey, Billy?' he inquired, addressing the boy.

'*Shouldn't Oi!*' replied Billy.

'Then, by Jove! you shall,' exclaimed the trainer excitedly. 'Send him over to my place to-night, George, old friend,' he said, turning to the farmer and clapping him heartily on the back as he spoke, 'and you're on a monkey to nothing on Mulligatawny for the Cesarewitch.'

'*Done*, along with you,' replied his host, 'and we'll have a drop more of the brown brandy to drink Mulliga-what-d'ye-call-him's jolly good health.'

Accordingly, once more was the brown brandy pulled out, and shortly afterwards the trainer, having mounted the grey hack, started for his return journey to Newmarket at a hand gallop, feeling better pleased with himself than he had been for a very considerable period.

Just as Tom Toovey and his wife had sat down to supper that night, Master William Grimes turned up in his master's dogcart, much to the delight of his new master.

'You shall ride your first gallop to-morrow morning,' said

he, addressing the boy, as he handed him over to the head lad belonging to the establishment for the night, 'and later on you shall be 'prenticed to me, all right and tight according to custom. Will that suit you, young 'un, eh?'

'Yes, zur,' replied Billy, grinning double, as he clumped off.

But if our friend, the trainer, was delighted with his newly-found treasure that evening, how much more so was he when he witnessed his bucolic *protégé's* first performance in the pigskin! Delight was not the word for it, in fact, so exuberant was his joy. The boy had got hands, nerve, everything—including a head upon his shoulders, he declared. And when, in the course of the morning, hearing an outcry in the yard, he went out to ascertain the cause, and found the youthful Billy with his jacket off administering a sound thrashing to one of the stable lads, he not only presented the future knight of the pigskin with a sovereign on the spot, but threatened to visit his stable companions with all manner of pains and penalties if they tried any of their games on with his young friend.

That very afternoon he instructed his lawyers to have Billy's indentures made out, and by the last post dispatched a letter to the stable commissioner in London, desiring him to take all the long shots he could get, to win fifty thousand about Mulligatawny for the Cesarewitch.

And the money was got on at a comparatively small outlay, and little Billy Grimes, now a full-blown apprentice, found favour in his master's eyes more and more every day, and was, in consequence, most cordially hated by the other lads, by whom he was christened 'Chawbacon,' 'Young Turniptops,' and other opprobrious names.

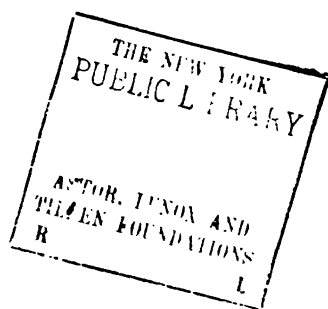
And Tom Toovey, when he was asked by his friends who was going to ride Mulligatawny in the Cesarewitch, would reply in an injured manner that as he could not get a jockey he should be obliged to put up one of his stable lads. And this coming to the ears of the Arguses and Peeping Toms of the sporting press, it came to pass that Mulligatawny (who was going great guns) receded in the betting instead of shortening in price. And Tom Toovey rubbed his hands with glee and put more money on his horse, and more on the top of that, and looked forward to the race with the greatest confidence imaginable.

* * * * *

When the numbers went up for the Cesarewitch, and the name of 'Grimes,' written in chalk was descried opposite



Continuing to the Post



Mulligatawny's number, down went that noble animal a hundred per cent. in the estimation of the racing public.

'A "chalk" jockey!' quoth they.

'That's not good enough to win the Cesarewitch, for certain; and what a name, too! Grimes!'

'*Lay* against Mulligatawny, not back him, that's the "straight tip," depend upon it.'

The upshot of it was that Tom Toovey's colt started at 25 to 1.

Some of the knowing ones, though, when they had overlooked the horse in the birdcage and noticed how fit he looked, and what a business-like appearance there was about the little lad who rode him, determined not to let him run loose. When he cantered down to the post with Tom Toovey on his grey hack alongside, they liked the look of the horse still more.

'The colt's a Cesarewitch winner all over, and that lad's a "workman," or I'm very much mistaken,' remarked one of the best judges of racing there. And he was quite right.

When the horses appeared in sight with Mulligatawny in the centre, full of running, and shouts were raised for Tom Toovey's colt, and when the bushes were reached and the 'chalk' jockey, with all the confidence of an old hand, let his horse out, it was all over bar shouting.

He won, in fact, pulling up. Tom Toovey had a good day, you may depend; indeed, he netted close on seventy thousand pounds altogether in bets. He put on his chalk jockey a thousand to nothing, and he didn't forget to pay his farmer friend the 'monkey' he promised him, you may depend. That worthy man, it may be mentioned, made a few investments besides on his own account, so *he* didn't do badly, either. I am afraid the old port and the brown brandy suffered considerably when he arrived home at Mildenhall that night.

No need to ask how little Billy got on eventually, for is not the name of Grimes as familiar to all students of turf lore as household words? He is quite at the top of the tree now, and never tires of telling the story of how he became a jockey—a 'chalk jockey,' as old Tom Toovey would say.

THE FUTURE OF BRITISH SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

By ROCKWOOD.



WE are almost within hearing of the chimes which will herald the arrival of the year 1900, and already the chroniclers are busy with their concluding chapters of the history of the nineteenth century. Religion, Art, Politics, War, and Agriculture will have special articles devoted to them, and why not Sport? Since the last of the 'seventeens' we have seen many changes indeed. How many more can we imagine are in store for us! The century that is dying began with Pierce Egan, and it might quite well have ended with *Bell's Life*; but dear old *Nunquam Dormio*, a British institution beloved by the fathers of the present school of sportsmen, has had to succumb to time and the changeable nature of a change-loving people. 'They read *Bell's Life*,' says Thackeray (and a very pleasant paper too, with a great deal of erudition in the answers to correspondents). That the genuine Briton is a true sportsman we see exemplified every day in the cricket-field, the football-field, the hunting-field, and (the outcome of all) the battle-field. Time indeed, through rapidity and small cost of travel, the newspaper, and cheaper education, may have softened the British nature, but the desire for sport exists all the same. We no longer bait bulls or bears, the dog-fighting matches have disappeared even from the semi-civilised districts of the black countries, the rat-pit is unknown, the badger is no longer the test of courage of the parish cur or the bull-dogs of Tom or Jerry, and the men who are acquainted with the arts of cock-feeding and cock-setting are known to but very few indeed, though we would all be the better for the sight of a good main in the morning in these days when pluck seems at times to be barely up to the standard of a plucked pigeon. If we have lost such, we have gained in other directions. Golf, common only to Scotland up till within the last decade, has spread all over England, and the call of 'Fore!' is heard from Land's End to John-o'-Groat's House. Lawn Tennis is a new accession, and Polo was unknown in England at least till within the past twenty years. Cricket, even if forced

from the village green inside the 'gate-money' enclosure, still holds its popularity, and Football, associated in the minds of the men of the 'fifties' with Rugby and Harrow, is, *par excellence*, the game of the clerk, the citizen, and the unskilled labourer in every town and village of England and Scotland. Base Ball and La Crosse we have imported from America, but these exotics have not flourished under a British climate so well as many had expected. Yet who that lives in Great Britain can say that he is without a health-giving game, sport, or pastime that suits him. The disciples of Isaac Walton are as numerous as they are enthusiastic. We have some thousands of angling clubs in the United Kingdom; pisciculture has become an art in many parts of the country, even if the pollution of rivers by the refuse of chemical works and dye vats has caused the rod to be laid aside, as useless as the flail of our farming fathers before the steam-driven threshing machine. We have streams stocked with artificially reared trout, which a hundred years ago were unruffled by a single fin; a hundred years ago we had not a single salmon ladder, and when the eager fish going home from the sea in October found the floods too strong for his ascent and leaped short of the edge of the linn, there he had to remain a certain prey to the deadly leister of the gipsy poacher. Angling will always stand fast as long as the falling rain makes rivers run, and with better knowledge of the habits of fishes and their food, with improved tackle, and a general anxiety evinced on the part of the public for systematic preservation, the rod will long find work for the reel, and the merry little reel fill the willow-wove creel.

Shooting, since the commencement of the nineteenth century, has undergone far more changes than its quieter sister of the lake and the stream. To change, it must, indeed, always be subject at periods of ten, fifteen, or twenty years, possibly, if we consider the rapidity with which one scientist excels another in the invention of some improved weapon or explosive, at even more rapid intervals. In the early part of the century we had much waste land around our manors, which afforded the best of cover for partridges; hedges were rough, wild, and rarely trimmed, giving good shelter for game in the later Autumn and Winter months, and stubbles were left quite as long as full-grown rye-grass hay at the present time. These were the good old times of pointers and spaniels, and the finding of game was an art in which a sportsman prided

himself, as well as in the killing of it. The gunmaker possibly worked the first great reform when he gave us the deadly fulminate, at first loose in the hammer, and next with the cap, and the old flint-lock with its pan-flashing and hang-fire tendencies was relegated to the glass case in the gun-room for ancient weapons. Then came the reaping machine, which left scarcely any stubble at all, and birds had to be sought among the turnips, the wurtzel, the potato haulms, or the seeds. The breechloader superseded the muzzle-loader, and now the sportsman does not seek the partridge, which is driven over him as he waits, gun in hand, with loader ready to give him a fresh-charged weapon when required. 'Have the dogs all gone to the dogs?' asks the shade of some old sportsman who looks in vain to see some noble animals quartering the ground over which he has often trod with his muzzle-loader, his shot belt, and his powder flask. We are afraid this is the case, and that the old system will only live in picture and in story. We should have liked much if we could have retained some of the old styles of shooting as perfected and improved by our forefathers, but 'Onward!' is the call of Time.

With grouse, as with partridges, driving is now the favourite system of shooting, except for a few weeks after the 12th of August, the opening day. Forty or fifty years ago, to shoot either of the two classes of birds alluded to was deemed unsportsmanlike. Fifty years after this is there any one to say that it will not be deemed old-fashioned? Electric ignition, smokeless and silent powders, light guns with long-distance killing power, are the talk of every gun-room or grouse lodge smoking-room, and who knows where it will all end? Perhaps we may see the flint-lock again brought into use, much after the manner in which coaching was revived. There are, however, more serious matters to be thought of as regards Lowland Shootings. We see land going out of cultivation in every direction; the introduction of improved binders and mowing machines, necessitated by foreign competition, driving the labourer to the towns, and thousands of acres of arable land laid down in permanent pasture. In time this must all tell in the raising and keeping of a head of game, for we know that partridges thrive best where there is much green-crop cultivation. We cannot well see that the allotments will ever prove a serious trouble, but short rents will cause a diminution in the numbers of the gamekeepers, and where there is temptation, with no

prevention, poaching is certain to result. The present system of pheasant-rearing being almost independent of all changes in agriculture, and in every way artificial, will hold its position so long as there are sportsmen who care for the battue, a feature of sport of the passing century which has certainly laid itself open to grave objections on the part of the older school.

Fox-hunting, which may be truly called the 'Roast-beef-of-Old-England' sport, flourishes stronger now than at any period of its history. And yet it has many opponents, chiefly of the squeamish school, who object to it on the ground of cruelty. Of a truth we stand in some danger at present of being forced into the ways of a mild-mannered, milk-faced type of man, whose courage is of that nature which allows him to stand up and preach to the passing crowd at street corners, bye-roads on the way to racecourses, and such places, where he is allowed to harangue at will. In the open air this sort of individual is really not dangerous; it is only when 'tamped,' like gun cotton or other explosive, that he becomes destructive. As the Secretary to the Spinsters' Club, United, for the suppression of All Healthy Pastimes, he gets up meetings, prepares petitions, calls upon the local members of Parliament to ask their assistance, and, in general, makes himself a nuisance. The Church has generally been with us as regards hunting, so is the Second House of Parliament, and many of the County Councils are composed of men who are regularly to be found at the covert-side during the hunting season. So far, then, this British pastime, the one pastime which we can claim as entirely peculiar to England, is safe from the cavaliers of cant and drivel. But we must look at the aspect from another point of view. We see foreign produce pouring into our markets from all quarters, and we see the price of home produce reduced in consequence. The farmers cannot grow wheat at a profit, nor can it very well be shown that they can raise anything on the land which will allow them to pay their rent and maintain their wives and families. The landlord without rent, and no other source of income, is in nine cases out of ten in an even more pitiable plight than the tenant. The establishment can no longer be maintained with dignity, so the house, shootings, and gardens must either be let or sold. If the new purchaser or lessee is a hunting man and has made his fortune—or better, *is still making a fortune* in commerce—the mill will give all that which the land is forced to deny. The strapper and the groom will have

his wage, the farmer's wife will have increased prices for butter and eggs, and, with a market for wheat denied him, the farmer may be able to make things a little better (we do not think they can ever be what they were thirty year ago) by disposing of oats, beans, carrots, and forage to the hunt followers, and may keep at times a young colt or a hunter which he has broken and ridden himself. So long as he can do this all will go well ; but we have, on the other hand, to watch the advocacy of a strong body of farmers for ' patch farming,' *i.e.* the better cultivation of the finest portions of their holdings, and the non-cultivation or laying down to grass of much which must at present be ploughed under the four-course system of rotation of crops, which is to be found in three-fourths of our leases. This, in many quarters, and more particularly round London, would mean public prohibition of hunting, or, what would be worse, the very general use of that most barbarous invention of the nineteenth century, barbed wire.

That we must have different systems of cultivation to those now in vogue, a return to Protection or ruined farmers, is plain to the merest parish schoolboy, and every change we have in our system of cultivation must affect fox-hunting. The Essex clays laid down in grass would furnish splendid hunting grounds for London men, and possibly, as with the Scottish deer forests, the sporting rental will there become the chief, and not the secondary one, as at present. The right to hunt over lands is a more valuable one than the right to shoot over the same, if we may judge from the amount of money spent in the maintenance of hunters ; and with agriculture at a very low ebb, we no doubt shall see some system of fixing and realising the full value thereof by the commencement of the twentieth century. In short, trespass in pursuit of the fox will yield a fair amount of revenue to the agricultural classes whose land is regularly hunted over, or trespassed, by man and horse.

Coursing has seen many changes during the past twenty years. It reached the zenith of its popularity between 1850 and 1870, after which it seems to have fallen off greatly. The ' gate-money ' meetings, with the coursing of captured and confined hares, fortunately now all done away with, has, in the end, very nigh killed it. Agricultural depression has also had its effects upon this, the most healthy of out-door pastimes ; a great many of the old farmers, who were its best supporters, having been

forced to give up their kennels. The Hares and Rabbits Bill rendered the preservation of the first-named in many districts impossible; and with little or no interest now excited over the contest for the Blue Riband of the Leash, the Waterloo Cup, the position at present is not a satisfactory one. Another hundred years may likely see it as extinct as hawking, for though we may be able to derive some sport from the shooting of clay pigeons, we are never likely to do so from coursing 'clay hares.' On the moor and fell lands of Cumberland and Scotland it would be well to form Hare Preservation Societies apart from coursing altogether.

Possibly, in these days, when intelligence in the lower animals is everywhere appreciated, the four-season champion greyhound will have his so-called cunning given full value for. Sir Walter Scott was much against the modern system on account of a dog being punished for showing that it began to use its wits. We may therefore see clearly in the twentieth century a return to the old system of coursing, in which a stake will be given for old dogs, all slipped singly in the open, the dog that kills most hares out of three fair courses to win. This would bring in a sportsman-like style of coursing which the public would appreciate; at present not one in ten can master the arithmetic of the business with its two for first turn, two for a go-bye, &c. What is called cunning in the greyhound, and punished therefor, is the genuine intelligence which makes valuable the old Scottish deerhound, from which most of the deerhounds are descended.

When we come to the national sport, for undoubtedly horse-racing is the British National Sport, we find several serious difficulties facing us. That concern is felt in high places for its future is well manifested by recent public utterances. The Duke of Devonshire, when thanking the Royal Agricultural Society at the recent meeting at Chester for electing him President, said he was glad to know that they were not going to attack racing, and promised to show them (alluding to the proximity of Newmarket), when they came to Cambridge, the finest live stock in the world. At the Colchester Oyster Feast, His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge said he had a *penchant* for Newmarket, and that he considered manly sports, and an occasional fall over a fence, made a man active and efficient when emergencies arose, while the mere bookworm was but a poor creature to rely upon at times. The Dean of Colchester, at the same gathering, said he 'had a liking for racing,

and, if he had his way, he should like certain days set apart in England for the working man to go and see horse-racing. It was not the quadruped, it was not the four legs of these beautiful animals to which he objected. If only racecourses could be swept of their degrading associations, the very first man to go and see racing would be the Dean of Colchester.' We are sorely afraid that unless 'the fifth leg' is speedily amputated, that racing will not go well in the future. The turf is at present haunted by the very scum of humanity, and unless some means are taken to remove these, racing will go down for certain. Anthony Trollope, good sportsman as novelist, wrote in his *Book of Sports*, twenty-five years ago : 'It is from no antipathy to the sport, or any other sentiment than a desire to minister to its perpetuity, that we whisper in the ear of the professional frequenters of Epsom, Ascot, and Newmarket, that a worm is at the root of their favourite pursuit, and that unless the men of influence exert themselves, the depravity, abuses, and increasing laxity of Turf morality will culminate in the withdrawal from the racecourse of all men to whom honour or honesty are something more than a name.' Trollope alluded to the practices which prevailed regarding the ruling of certain stables by certain unscrupulous betting men of the time. Very recent reforms have improved the turf in this direction ; what we have to fear is from the camp followers. The people have the power of electing County Councillors, and County Councillors will have much to do in the future as regards the holding of race meetings. Respectable people are afraid to travel by rail on certain lines of railway on race days, and people are sometimes robbed and insulted in broad daylight, the gangs of roughs being so powerful. House-breaking at night and horse-racing by day is the profession of many, and so property in close proximity to a racecourse becomes depreciated where it really should be increased. In such a condition of matters it cannot be wondered at that local influences should be set to work to remove that 'leg' which the Dean of Colchester says prevents him from running across from Colchester to Newmarket to see a horse-race. How many thousands of well-living men, not Churchmen, are there who would like to do the same if 'the course were cleared' in a broader and more emphatic sense than the mere forming of a passage for the contesting horses. So far as the improvement of the actual stamina of the horses is concerned, we see the Jockey Club

gradually working in a useful direction, and, through the checking of our racing two-year-olds, gradually building up a type of old cup horses fit to run till five and six years old. We know that the British Turf began its great career in a healthy direction, just about a hundred years ago, and its best and most satisfactory period was between 1800 and 1850, according to Trollope, and other writers. Besides being the Sport of Kings, let us hope to see it gradually improved, and supported by the respectable man of means, the hard-working artisan, and the clergyman.

‘HONOURS EASY.’

By ‘FUSBOS.’

THE sporting little race meeting held every Spring under the auspices of the far-famed Wortlebury Hunt, is invariably looked upon by the good people of Tiptoppingtonshire as quite the most important festivity of the year; and this is saying a good deal, for the inhabitants of those parts are proverbially festive to a degree.

The Race Week, as it is called, though the actual meeting itself is confined to one day, is indeed one perpetual round of gaiety. For instance, there is a meet of the hounds on Monday, and a dance the same evening at Tolderol Towers, the abode of Sir Charles Lightheart, the popular and volatile master.

On Wednesday, the aforesaid Hunt Meeting takes place, followed at night by the Steeplechase Ball at Toppington Town Hall.

Thursday.—The last meet of the season, when Sir Charles Lightheart takes the opportunity of entertaining the whole field at breakfast at Tolderol Towers. Grand Fancy Ball at Mrs. Gadabout's in the evening.

Friday.—Everybody has a headache, and is busily engaged in pulling himself or herself together for the Archery Ball at the Town Hall, which event winds up the week satisfactorily.

There are invariably good fields, and in consequence good sport at the Wortlebury Hunt Steeplechases, as is only natural

with such a staunch patron as Sir Charles at the head of affairs, popular interest as a rule being centred in the Hunt Cup, in which the crack riders of the Hunt, on their best horses, are wont to exhibit themselves in racing costume, for the benefit of their friends in general, and the fair sex in particular.

Unless it is, perhaps, a red coat, there is no garment that your country swell 'fancies' himself in so much as a racing jacket, and the prettier the colour, the more the proud wearer is thought of by his womenkind.

As Tom, or Algy, or Dicky, as the case may be, canters down the course in front of the stand, in the preliminary canter, his jacket of many colours swelling itself out in the breeze like a balloon, the admiring ladies say to themselves—nay, very often aloud, 'What a fine fellow!' the object of their admiration in nine cases out of ten feeling anything but a fine fellow, with the cutting east wind making his eyes water, and his pulling horse rasping his rider's unfortunate knuckles against his withers until they are nearly denuded of their flesh.

As I have just said, the Hunt Cup is usually the most attractive item on the card, but this year the great event had its nose completely put out of joint, as the saying is, by a sporting match, arranged to take place on the same day, between two prominent members of the Hunt, and which had created a vast amount of interest throughout the county for the past two months. It was thus described on the race card :—

'MATCH, 500*l.* (half forfeit); 3 miles over the Steeplechase course;
13 stone each.

Mr. James Mottleston's, Captain Crosstree aged.
(Sky blue, green cap.)

Mr. Algernon Burton's, Soubrette 5 yrs.
(White, scarlet cap.)

Under any circumstances this match would have been an interesting one, both the horse and the mare being of more than average quality, two as good hunters indeed as ever faced the large Tiptoppingtonian fences; but the real attraction was that there was a certain amount of romance attached to it in another way than sport, it being not only a well-known fact that both owners were desperately in love with the same lady, and were as jealous of one another in consequence, as possible, but it was a pretty well understood thing—at least the neighbours had so arranged it amongst themselves—that the winner of the match

would to a certainty prove the winner of the wife. Pretty Blanche Thornton, in fact, was popularly supposed to be wavering between the riches of young Mr. Mottlestone, the only son and heir of Mr. Mottlestone of Mottlestone Park, the wealthy soap manufacturer, on the one hand, and the good looks of Algy Burton on the other; and the race was to decide the momentous question.

Whether this was really the case or not, I cannot say. I only tell the story as I heard it, and a very pretty story of course it was. There is one thing, however, that I do know, and that is, that 'Tiny,' as Algy Burton was always called by his friends, was decidedly the favourite for the race—so far as good wishes went at least—the talent being pretty generally of opinion that in this race Captain Crosstree would carry too many guns for Soubrette.

'Tiny was a stupid young donkey,' they said, 'not to have stipulated for some concession in weight.' The fact was 'Tiny,' who was a gentleman from the top of his curly head to the toes of his very neat boots, and one of the cheeriest young fellows in existence, was just about as popular as they make 'em, to use a '*fin-de-siècle*,' expression, with everybody, both high and low; whilst young 'Soapsuds,' as they called his rival, who was about as arrogant and purseproud a young gentleman as you would meet in a day's march, was not.

Every one, therefore, especially the ladies, with whom Tiny was a prime favourite—he was rather of the pocket order, and they spoke of him in consequence as a dear little man, a nice little boy, and so on, pretty souls!—hoped most devoutly that Tiny and Soubrette would prove too many between them for young Soapsuds and Captain Crosstree, and win the double event.

Pretty Miss Muffet, who, if the truth must be told, would have very much liked to have taken possession of Tiny herself, even went the length of saying that she 'hoped that horrid Mithter Mottlestone would break hith neck,' for which charitable remark she was justly called to order by her mother and sisters.

The chances are that, under ordinary circumstances, the bold Tiny would have stipulated for a seven-pound allowance, if not more, for his mare; but the fact was that the match was made *after dinner*—one of Sir Charles Lightheart's famous bachelor dinners at Tolderol Towers—and after dinner, as we all know,

a man is very apt to cast discretion to the winds, and do and say things he would never be guilty of if in full possession of his sober senses.

It was so in this case. The claret was circulating briskly and everybody was talking at once—racing, hunting, and the drama being the principal themes—when suddenly a voice, a thick, stammering voice, was heard above all the others, loudly offering to back his (hiccup) horse, Captain Cuck-cuck-crosstree against any other (hiccup) in the country for a mum-mum-monkey, 13 st. each, over the Hunt (hiccup) course.

The voice was that of young Soapsuds—Soapsuds with just as much wine inside him as he could conveniently hold, and more arrogant and conceited than usual in consequence.

The words were hardly out of his mouth before he was snapped up by Tiny Burton.

'Done with you, Soapsuds, my boy!' he sang out cheerily from the far end of the table, 'and I name my mare Soubrette.'

Out came the betting-books accordingly, and the match was duly ratified before they could realise the fact that he had rather given himself away.

The mare was well bred enough for anything, and a faultless fencer, but she lacked the size and power of Captain Crosstree, who, in addition, was a splendid jumper, and though not so well bred as the mare, looked as if he could stay for ever.

Master Tiny, in fact, for once in his life had rather put his foot into it, and he was soon made aware of it by sundry of the knowing ones present loudly offering to lay six to four on the Captain, as they termed Captain Crosstree. The only 'pull' he appeared to have, in fact, was that he was decidedly a better horseman than 'Soapsuds.' And, acting on this idea, his admiring friends booked all the six to fours available, with such avidity that, as the sporting papers say, 'the mare left off at 5 to 4, taken and wanted.'

The week previous to that in which the Wortlebury Hunt Steeplechases were to take place was so horribly wet, and the weather forecast looked so unfavourable, that it would have surprised nobody had the eventful day turned out a miserable one. Imagine, therefore, everybody's delight when on awakening on the Wednesday morning, they found the sun shining brilliantly, the sky with hardly a cloud in it, and altogether every prospect of a glorious day.

I don't know anything more trying to the temper than a steeplechase meeting—or a race meeting of any sort, if it comes to that—on a wet day. It is bad for the horses, bad for the jockeys, bad for the speculators, and bad for everybody concerned, in fact.

No wonder, then, that the holiday-makers were on the very best of terms with themselves, and said 'thank you' to the clerk of the weather, as they looked up at the clear blue sky above their heads as they drove, or rode, or walked as the case might be, on to the racecourse.

By the time the saddling bell rang for the first race of the day, there was such a concourse assembled as had not been witnessed there before, so everybody said, since the meeting had been established, and all on account of the match. One or two London bookies of renown had actually put in an appearance on the strength of it, the gambling between the pair promising to be extremely heavy.

The first question everybody asked his neighbour in coming on the course was, 'How is Captain Crosstree?' or 'Have you seen Soubrette? How is she looking?'

Though the weather was so fine, there was no doubt about it, the ground was frightfully heavy, the course from the distance being a perfect quagmire in places, with pools of water discernible here and there, all over the place.

Backers of Soubrette did not like the outlook at all, and looked uncommonly blue when they saw the horses in the first race struggling and pounding through the mire. They thought of the great leathering, well ribbed up Captain Crosstree, with his powerful quarters, just the sort of horse to revel in this heavy going, and felt very sad, wishing most devoutly that they had not been so handy about taking those six to fours that night in Sir Charles's dining-room. Meanwhile the races progressed.

The Innkeeper's Plate, and the Farmer's Cup—the latter producing a good field and a tremendous wrangle, terminating in blows—were run off; then came an interval for luncheon; next, the Hunt Steeplechase—usually the *pièce de resistance* of the meeting; then The Match.

There was an immediate exodus from the carriages to go and have a look at the competing pair in the paddock; and very soon there was such a crowd of admirers of both sexes assembled round Captain Crosstree and Soubrette, that any one coming late could not get within yards of them.

Talk of the favourites for the Derby, indeed! why they were not in it. When the two gentlemen riders were hoisted on to their respective steeds, it was all they could do to thread their way on to the course, so mobbed were they by their admirers. Both gentlemen looked confident, 'Soapsuds' especially; the latter, as he left the paddock, pulling 'up for a moment to lay one of the London bookies seven to four in hundreds on his horse.

Notwithstanding the heavy state of the ground, admirers of the mare did not altogether lose heart, and what they desired to see, was Soapsuds to make strong running on the Captain, hoping that by adopting those tactics, as in all probability he would, he must eventually pump his horse out, when Tiny would at once bring his mare to the front, and endeavour to beat him for speed at the finish.

Needless to say, Blanche Thornton was there on her guardian's coach, and was by no means the least excited person on the course.

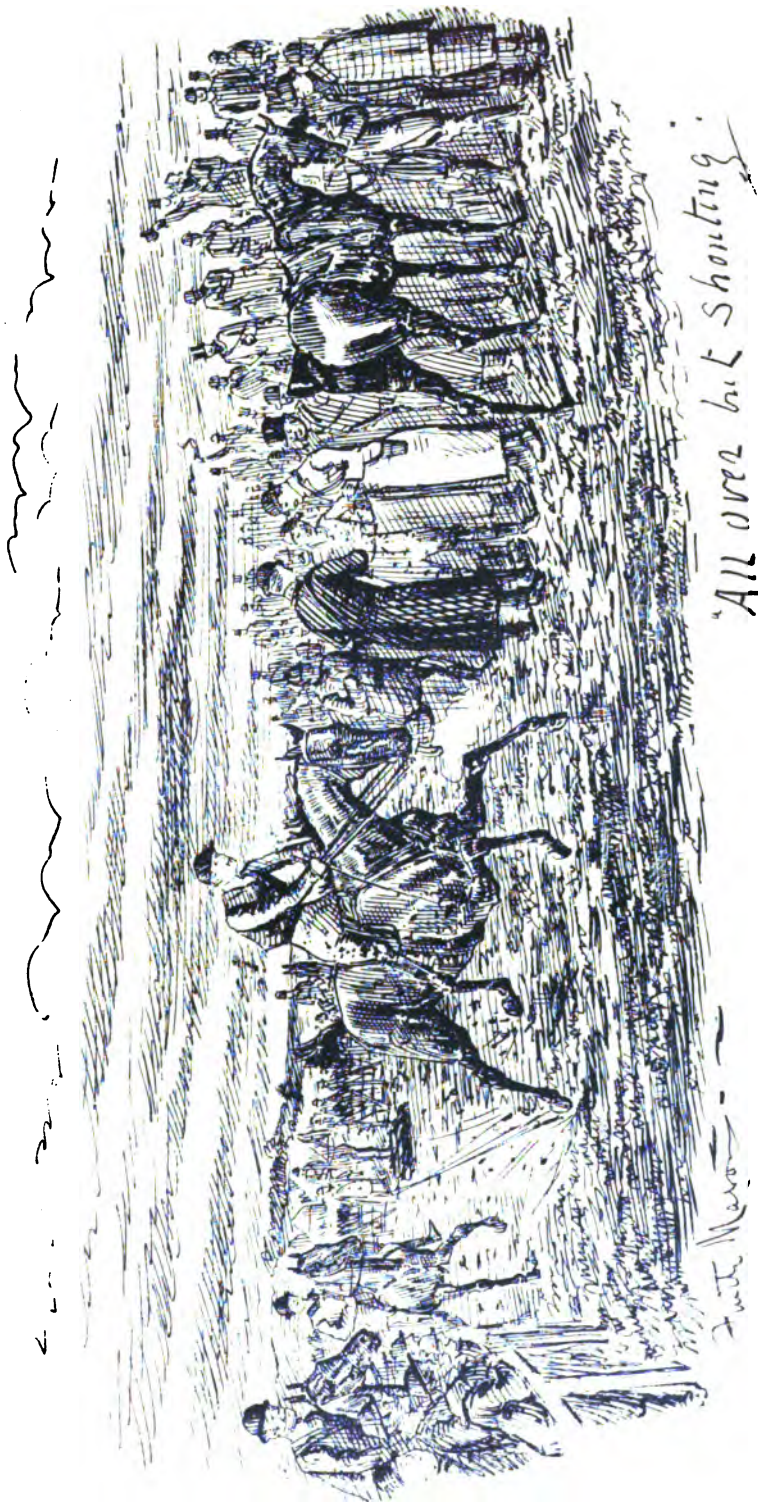
'If you don't win, sir,' she said to Tiny, as he left her side to make ready for the race, 'I'll never speak to you again.'

'I'll do my best, you may be sure of that, Blanche,' was Tiny's reply, as he leapt lightly to the ground and made off.

The two horses, with their riders, having made their way on to the course, they proceeded to indulge in the usual preliminary canter. Both jumped the hurdle like birds, and the backers of the mare took additional 'heart of grace' when they saw how she skimmed along through the mud, in direct contrast to Captain Crosstree's steam-engine style.

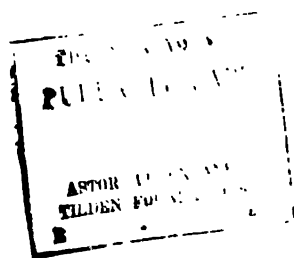
Pulling up at a trot, the pair made straight for the starter, and the next moment a roar from the crowd announced that they were off, and the match had begun. The first three fields were grass, and fairly good going, and over these Soapsuds made strong running. 'Go on, old man!' exclaimed Tiny's admirers, when they saw what his opponent was at. That gentleman, however, was not born yesterday, as the saying is, for, to their chagrin, they watched him steady his horse in the very next field, and the way he pulled Captain Crosstree together in the ridge and furrow that followed, was presently voted most artistic.

'Couldn't wide bettar myself,' muttered Captain Coper, the well-known gentleman rider, eyeing Soapsuds through his glasses, as he quickened his pace a little on approaching the



All over but shouting.

With Marion



fence at the end. 'Seven to four in ponies, I name the winner!' he exclaimed, as Captain Crosstree cleared the obstacle in fine style and went on full of running.

'Take you 75 to 40?' responded an admirer of Soubrette, as he noted how well the little mare was going.

'All right,' snapped the Captain, booking the bet.

As the horses continued on their journey, fencing without a single mistake, and keeping close together, Captain Crosstree leading, the excitement grew to fever heat, and when the pair, having completed the circuit, got into the line for home, the cheers that went up for each might have been heard in the next county.

It was anybody's race, they cried. And so it looked until the last fence but one from home, when a yell suddenly went up of 'The mare's beat!' as Soubrette stumbled on landing, and Tiny was seen to give her a reminder with his whip.

'Tiny's done for! Tiny's done for!' exclaimed poor Blanche Thornton, sinking back in her seat and turning quite white as she watched that horrid young Soapsuds drawing away at his ease from his now palpably beaten rival.

'One hundred to one on Captain Crosstree!' 'Well done, Soapsuds!' yell the lookers-on, as, jumping the last hurdle, the big horse comes along full of running, his rider grinning double, in a high state of delight.

But, alas! how often is the cup of wine snatched from our lips at the very last moment! The good horse, Captain Crosstree, his head in his chest, and pulling double, his rider standing up in his stirrups and looking round in derision at his rival in the distance, is barely a hundred and fifty yards from the winning-chair, when he suddenly puts his foot in a hole, and over he goes, turning a complete summersault and sending his rider over his head into a perfect sea of mud.

'He's killed! he's broke his neck!' roared the horrified bystanders, and a rush is made for the fallen man. He is only half stunned, however, and he and Captain Crosstree get on their legs together, just as Tiny, who on witnessing the catastrophe to the other had at once called vigorously on Soubrette, struggled past him on his way to the winning-post.

It was all over but shouting now, and, with the cheers that greeted Soubrette's victory ringing in his ears, the now crest-fallen young Soapsuds, who had not thought it worth while to

re-mount, walked back to the stand leaning on the arm of a friend. His so doing lost him the race, for to his astonishment on reaching the weighing-room the news reached him that something was wrong with the winner.

It was, indeed, too true. The odd pounds of dead weight, that Tiny had had to carry to make up his thirteen stone, had during the race become detached somehow from the saddle ; the consequence being, that on getting into the scale, he could not draw the weight or anything like it. He was disqualified, and young Soapsuds had not gone the course. The race, therefore, was void.

When Sir Charles Lightheart was asked his opinion of the whole affair, he gave it in his usual happy style. 'Honours are easy,' said he, 'but I'll bet any of you 6 to 4 to any amount, that Tiny wins the odd trick.' And so Tiny did, for the fair Blanche, in spite of all young Soapsuds could say to the contrary, persisted in declaring that, in her opinion, Tiny had won the match.

'I know nothing about horrid weight or anything of that sort,' said she. 'Tiny came in first: *I saw him!* Won? Of course he won; and I think it's very rude of you to contradict me.'

Oh, yes, Tiny won the odd trick—what do *you* think?

HUGO MEYNELL'S DREAM.

By 'A QUORNITE.'



HO made our little 'varmint' red the hero of the Quorn,
And through the great ancestral lands, the home of hound and
horn?

His health is drunk with loud acclaim throughout the Mercian plain,
His record through all ages will in Leicestershire remain :
From where the old grey castle stands, wherever you may roam,
To where the great historian by Syston had his home.
Round Rothley still the memory of great Macaulay clings,
And through the pastures and the groves all round the music rings—
The music all true sportsmen love, the note that's always good,
To bring the colour to your cheek and rouse the stagnant blood.
I'll tell you how it came about. Bold Hugo had a dream :
He dreamed he saw the ruby-streak through field and hedgerow gleam ;

Though hitherto they'd chased alone 'the monarch of the glade,'
 The deer had dwindled, and the sport of Hubert's boys decayed.
 It seemed to all the Leicester men the day was drawing near
 When they no more could solace find in chasing lordly deer ;
 What few there were remaining found their pasture in a park,
 And made their way to table 'neath the keeper's deadly mark.
 Although, perchance, a warrantable stag should chance to range,
 A bullet laid him low, or Mr. Bullock of 'The Grange'
 Grew fearfully indignant at the ravage he had made ;
 So men could scarce a quarry find throughout the last decade.
 But *hunt* they *must*, and 'carted' stags were not at all the sort
 To yield lord, squire, and yeoman any satisfying sport.
 This preyed upon great Hugo's mind, and hence it came about
 He dreamed of that same chevy, but he failed to find it out ;
 Till rumours came from Cheshire—and you know how rumour flies—
 Of famous runs bold Charley gives, how gamely Charley dies.
 'Why, that's the beast I dreamed about !' cries Meynell with delight ;
 'I've heard he dwells in cosy gorse ! We'll see if that's all right !'
 He soon found furze in Leicestershire, and threw ten couples in ;
 That same red beast said 'Come along !' and gave a glorious spin.
 They didn't raise the loud 'Whoo-oo !' but raised it further on,
 And generations from that day round Quorn have come and gone ;
 While ever since that Quorndon plain and bosky Cottesmore rings
 With sounds that, in sere autumn, usher in 'the sport of kings.'
 Old Belvoir's widespread grass and plough are rife with horn and hounds
 Since Hugo Meynell northward came and crossed the Leicester bounds ;
 He shortly found a jovial crew in Charley's wake to 'scream,'
 On high-bred steeds, to cross the meade, and verify his dream.
 Now, by our sire, Saint Hubert, was it not a goodly sight
 To see his fifty Quornites sailing on for 'foremost flight ?'
 The scarlet flashing up and down, to light the verdant plain—
 'Tis like the 'vestal virgins' fire, for aye it shall remain.
 The critic says that fire's gone out ; to Rome he must repair—
 And, bet your bottom dollar, boys, he's bound to find it there ;
 At any rate, *we'll* keep the sport and wear the scarlet too,
 We'll make the Leicester breezes ring with Meynell's wild 'halloo.'
 Our breezes all would cease to blow if neither horn nor hound,
 To cheer them on their free career, o'er Leicestershire were found.
 I had it straight from Boreas, who manages the show,
 Like Æolus, who worked the wires in times gone by, you know !'
 Said Boreas, 'We only send our breezes to the place
 Where scent's required and men are found who want to go the pace.'
 The year was eighteen hundred when theauteous Quorndon tan
 Streamed in the wake of Meynell's horn, and 'Kirby Gate' began

To send its grand contingent out to waken Gartree Hill.
 'The Gate' is gone, but Quornites make the place a fixture still,
 And scarlet, as I said before, goes flashing through the shires,
 The chosen home of venerie, the country of the squires ;
 But, when you see the fliers charge o'er timber and o'er stream,
 Just bear in mind you owe the treat to Hugo Meynell's Dream.

WON BY HIS HEELS.

By 'A CHASER.'

IT'S awfully slow!'

It was Swinler who spoke, as he threw himself into an armchair in the smoking-room of the Nag's Head Hotel, Crabtown—Swinler of the 119th Husbandiers, the fastest man in the slowest regiment of the service.

'What's slow, Swinler?' asked good-natured Lazarus Lawrence, a Levite officer better known as Larry Lawrence. 'Your watch, eh?' observing Swinler, examining the face of his gold repeater.

'My watch? No! it's the only thing that's *fast*. No, you're slow, the whole 119th is slow, the place is slow, the world itself is slow.'

'Ha, ha! The world. What is it the school-books used to say?—the world revolves on its own axletree every twenty-four hours, and goes round the sun in three hundred and sixty-five days; that isn't slow.'

'*Isn't* it,' was the reply; 'and it has been doing the same thing for a million of years without trying to beat its own record, as the Yankee trotting chaps put it. I consider it's mighty slow. Imagine being stuck for twelve months in an out-of-the-world hole like this, and other fellows enjoying fighting and pig-sticking all over the globe. Yes, Lawrence, I repeat, imagine us stuck here with no one but a long holly-hock of a curate to speak to, and not a girl within miles. By Jupiter, Larry, it's enough to give a fellow the blues. Yes, sir, the service is going to the dogs; what do you say, Algy?'

'Yes, possibly,' was my reply, 'but it's scarcely so bad as going to where you would have it to go.'

'Where's that, eh?'

'To the girls.'

'Humph,' was the reply; 'there's no need for any one getting afraid of that so far as the 119th is concerned. I believe those old match-makers go over the *Army List* with a pencil and mark down the regiments which are supposed to contain eligible men. The 119th, I have no doubt, has its page torn out for fear of making mistakes. Tailors: *Moses & Son*. Brokers: *Pledger & Co.*, wouldn't read well, eh.'

'Hang it, Swinler,' said Lawrence. 'Do pray have some *esprit de corps*; don't make things worse by looking at everything through yellow spectacles, or you'll be giving us the jaundice. Let's rather try and get up some frolic; what say you to some donkey-races? There are no horses in the place, but you can't say that it is badly off for donkeys.'

'A donkey-race. By all means let's have a donkey-race,' said the frolicsome Swinler. 'Who's game for a sweepstakes for a fiver a-piece?'

'No, thank you, Swinler, you generally manage to have the best of those things, my boy,' said Tougal McTavish, the Scotchman, 'a five-poun' note, ma man, 's a five-poun' note, and no' to be thrown awa' on races on sic-like beasties as cuddies.'

'Is it not just what I said?' said Swinler, turning round evidently disgusted; 'the 119th is the slowest regiment in the service; they ought to be known as the Donkey Dragoons.'

'Well, well, Swinler,' said Larry, laughing at McTavish's caninness, 'I'll match that donkey of old Hainslow, the green-grocer, against anything you can get in the village, for a quarter of a mile, eleven stone each; Algy, here, to ride mine.'

'Last donkey in to win?' was the query.

'No! First donkey in to win, just as in horse-racing. It is to be a race, not a flinging match for the amusement of these villagers.'

'Well, 25*l*. a-side, and the hire of the donkeys, over the old course. I'll take you.'

'You'll ride for me, of course?' said Lawrence.

'Well, I don't mind, although it's scarcely the kind of mount that I care for, but anything for diversion; when is it to come off?'

'To-morrow afternoon. We shall easily get hold of the

donkeys in the morning, before they have done much work, and they do not require to undergo what the sporting writers call a complete preparation for their engagement.'

'To-morrow afternoon, then,' said Swinler; 'mind, I'm to have the pick of the village for donkeys against that moke of old Hainslow's. I have not been on the back of a donkey since we were at Cairo.'

'Indeed,' said Lawrence. 'Why, I've seen you back yourself fifty times, and a pretty good donkey-race you generally made of it at billiards. Yes, my boy, you can have the pick of the village; but I don't mind letting you know something, and that is that Hainslow's donkey is the best of the lot, but he takes a lot of riding. It's a case of two strides, a stand fast, and a throw with him, and he likes best to gallop with his hind feet, and stand still with his fore ones.'

'Upon my word, Larry, this is nice news after making me promise to ride him. Aintree is nothing to it,' was my remark.

'Never mind; your legs are the longest in the regiment. You only get them under him, cross your feet like a sailor climbing a greasy pole, and I'll get boys to stick pins into him and make him go. And now let's get down to supper, and off to bed. If you don't mind, Swinler, we'll both come and help you to choose your donkey in the morning.'

'All right!' was the reply. 'I shall be glad of your assistance, but no larking, mind. I mean to win my "pony."'

Next morning, after breakfast, Larry Lawrence and I went down to Hainslow's, and, after a little talk, he agreed to let us have the loan of his donkey for a crown.

'But I warn ye to take care of him,' he said. 'I bought him from old Jones who keeps the Young Ladies' Boarding School at Buxton, and he says that he was regularly trained by the boys of the place, there, to pitch the young misses over his head, and had the reputation of being the best chucker-off in the town. He can gallop, though, if he likes, but he can stop when he likes, too.'

Having promised to send him down in charge of his lad to the racecourse a little before three o'clock, we joined Swinler in the Nag's Head courtyard, where we found him surrounded by donkeys and donkey-boys, all specially mustered at his request by Jack, the groom, who had passed the word that there was to be a donkey-race amongst the hofficers, and that they might make 'arf a sovereign out of their mokes. Good judge, possibly,

as he was of horse-flesh, our fast man could make nothing of donkeys, with their low-set shoulders, their plain necks, and their shapeless quarters. The 'short above and long below' kind of argument entirely failed him, and he was at his wits' end as to the type of animal to choose. In these circumstances he had to fall back on public form, and the information as to this was confusing as well as contradictory. 'Joe Juddocks's Judy had licked in a walk Barney Brallagan's Biddy, with a barrerful of carrots, not to speak of *hunions* and sparrergrass, and Biddy a drawin' ov an empty cart. Peter Finchley, the bone-gatherer, had a moke which could lick the lot ov 'em, with half a ton of old iron, the full length of the main street, and Dan Dickens had a nice hanimal, very fast,' and was warranted quiet in saddle and harness—a good certificate for a donkey. The best-looking of the lot was one which we found had never been ridden, and, as this is curiously enough the best certificate of a donkey's manners, Swinler selected him, and appointed the groom of the Nag's Head to see him dealt out half a feed of oats and a few carrots, just to put a little heart into him.

After luncheon, we strolled leisurely down to the grand stand of the old course, and were astonished to find that a large crowd had mustered. The Nag's Head Hotel groom was no doubt responsible for the presence of the mob, but *who* passed the word so fleetly and so far that there should be no fewer than four drags drawn up alongside the ropes, each with a fair sprinkling of the fair sex? The fellows of the 300th, or the Three Silly Ciphers, as they were termed, were there, having driven forty miles; so also was the house party from Crockford Castle, sixty miles off, and a lot of others, all anxious to see the great match between Hainslow's donkey, Neddy, and the pick of Crabtown. Even Swinler could not have complained of the place being slow, as, clad in his long military ulster, he shook hands with numerous old friends, and answered their kind inquiries for his 'bounding charger of the cabbage-cart.' It was, I must say, if anything, a little rough on the man who had consented to ride Neddy, for he had not bargained for a crowd of grinning spectators.

'Is this your doing, Lawrence?' I said to Larry, who, as usual, was the man who showed the least concern of all. 'If I thought that, I'm hanged if I wouldn't cry off and let you ride yourself.'

'It is not my doing, my boy, it is Swinler's, I believe, for last night, after we left him, I heard he had backed himself to win another pony over the affair with a fellow from Crockford. Things are *slow* here, and, of course, the word that there was to be a race went whistling all through the country like the wind in the night-time. But what of it? You need not care so long as you stick on.'

'Oh, yes, *if* I stick on; but the dismounting from these animals is sometimes as awkward as it is sudden. However, here comes Hainslow's boy with the moke, and here comes the unriden steed of Swinler's that's never had man or boy on his back.'

Passing into the little paddock, Lawrence led the way to the weighing-room. In the corner end there we found Farmer Jones, the clerk of the scales at the local meeting, all ready to weigh us out, and with his eleven stone weight in the scales.

Swinler was the first to strip for battle, and, throwing off his large ulster coat, revealed himself in his well-known colours of yellow and scarlet, or, as it was termed, the 'bilious and bibulous jacket.' Lawrence had never had any racing colours, so it was agreed that the Zetland Spots should be carried to victory, which resulted in my donning a red and white shirt for the purpose. We brought down the scales easily, and, there being no objections to overweight, went outside to superintend the saddling. My bit of pigskin was something that old Sam Merry, of St. James's Street, would have grinned at it if I had sent it him as a specimen of saddlery, for it was worn right into the wood of the tree. The stirrups were of a beautiful rusty mahogany colour, an artistic effect produced by hanging them up, saddle and all, in a damp stable, and taking care not to rub off the wet or damp with a cloth, as stupid grooms do. The leathers were long enough, if not too strong, and, slipping them down to the bottom and girthing up hard, my bounding steed was ready. Swinler had evidently a little more difficulty with his, for it had never had a saddle on its back, and plainly indicated that it did not want to have one. To the horror of its rider it started braying, and kept it up for quite five minutes, to the intense amusement of the fashionable portion of the onlookers. At last the girths were made fast and the stirrups adjusted, and Swinler vaulted smartly on to its back from the rear. It was like playing leap-frog, however, for no sooner was he in the saddle than he was landed in a most undignified



Won by his heels

Al. Howell

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position under its nose. This was, no doubt, rather disconcerting to him, and it certainly was not very assuring to me. I resolved to make a very nervous start, and quietly, when he was eating a bit of carrot, lifted my right leg over Neddy, and then settled into my seat with both feet of my rather long legs a few inches from the ground.

'Lock your legs under him,' said Larry, 'and he can't throw you ;' but I did not quite see my way to putting myself into such an undignified position.

At the very moment he spoke some one applied a pin to a tender part of his hind-quarter, and, to my surprise and chagrin, I found myself flung on to his neck, and thence, by a second jerk, deposited on the ground ; Swinler, who had got up a second time with permanent success, saying, as he walked past, 'Turn about's fair play. How do you like your mount ?'

'Better than my mount likes me,' was my reply, as I scrambled back into the saddle, and told the lad to lead him outside as quickly as possible. This he did, and in a few minutes both of us managed to do what may be called a canter past, but which, if Swinler or myself is asked about it, we should describe as a farewell fling, for we were jerked about in a cruel manner. At length we got down to the post, followed by all the ragged urchins of the place, laughing and jeering, and every now and then playing pranks with pins, which were cruel to the donkeys to begin with, and nearly intolerable to ourselves, for we felt by this time as if we had been on the 'Flying Dutchman,' going sixty miles off the rails. Farmer Jones, having tied his snuff-stained calico handkerchief on to his staff, acted as starter, but, on lowering his banner, our steeds, instead of answering the spurs, stopped and flung most vigorously, the result being that Swinler once more kissed the ground. Getting my toes down, and leaning well forward, I defied all Neddy's attempts to unseat me, but, still, could not get him to move a yard. My opponent, on the other hand, remounted quickly, and went off at a rattling pace, leaving me with my steed throwing his heels every moment into the air.

'Stick the bunch o' needles into 'im, 'Arry!' I heard a familiar voice shout loudly. I looked round and saw it was Hainslow.

Ere I could remonstrate the bunch of needles were applied in the rear by the greengrocer's boy, and Neddy bolted off at a

good speed after Swinler. Had the latter been at all careful he might have won the race very easily before I had ever left the post, but, thinking he had everything safe, he started to do some flourishing. Now, fine riding may be all very well, but what would be called brilliant horsemanship on a horse is nothing but brilliant donkeyship on a donkey. No sooner, therefore, did he get up his whip and apply his heels to his steed's side than the 'bilious and bibulous' jacket suddenly disappeared over its neck. Just as he had remounted, I, with Harry and the bunch of needles, got level with him, and what promised to be a race began. For five minutes, however, neither of our donkeys did anything but fling, and we did not make ten yards in all that time. It was more a case of keeping one's seat than passing the winning-post, so we did not persevere in any given direction. We were close enough at the time to hear that we were both the subjects of much merriment as well as badinage. 'Why don't yer get off and carry him, long-legs?' irreverently shouted one of the crowd, and off I got, but I must admit the action was an involuntary one on my part. Keeping hold of the bridle, Neddy commenced to back in the direction of the post, and, as every yard was in my favour, I was in no hurry to remount. Swinler, however, had his eye on me, and shouted, 'Get up, or it is no bet!' Reluctantly, I got into the saddle again, and just in time, for Swinler came away with a fresh spurt. Neck and neck we went till we were within three lengths of the post, and then some one flung a cabbage at us. The result of this was a flinging match, more fun, and more laughter.

'I'll bet an even fifty Swinler wins!' shouted old Captain Creek from his drag.

Nettled a little at this cut at my donkeyship, I turned round and said sharply, 'I'll have it, sir.' But how was I to have it? My donkey was just two lengths from the chair, where, with keen eye, watched Major Maloney, who was acting as judge, but his head was the wrong way, whilst that of Swinler's was towards the post. No time was to be lost; what was to be done? Should I back him? This I did, jerking him nearly a full length on to his hind-quarters. One more backward squeeze just as Swinler made his effort. In went the spurs, up went Neddy's heels in the air, and away I went ten yards in front of him. When I got up again I found that the race was over.

'Who's won, Major?' I shouted. 'I suppose I've lost!'

'No,' he says. 'It was the closest finish I ever saw in my

life. Your donkey *just flung in time, and got his heels past the post*, clear of the nose of Swinler's donkey.'

'Then I've won by his heels.'

'Yes,' said Swinler; 'but you won't get the money.'

'Why?'

'Because you weren't in the saddle when you finished.'

'And where was I?'

'Why, everybody agrees in saying that you were out of the saddle, and flying through the air, over your donkey's head.'

As I could not deny this, Larry Lawrence had to pay his 'pony' to Swinler, but Captain Creek sternly refused to accept my fifty. It was the best finish he had ever witnessed; and the funniest, and he thought it very hard that I should lose a race by a head, after winning it by the heels.

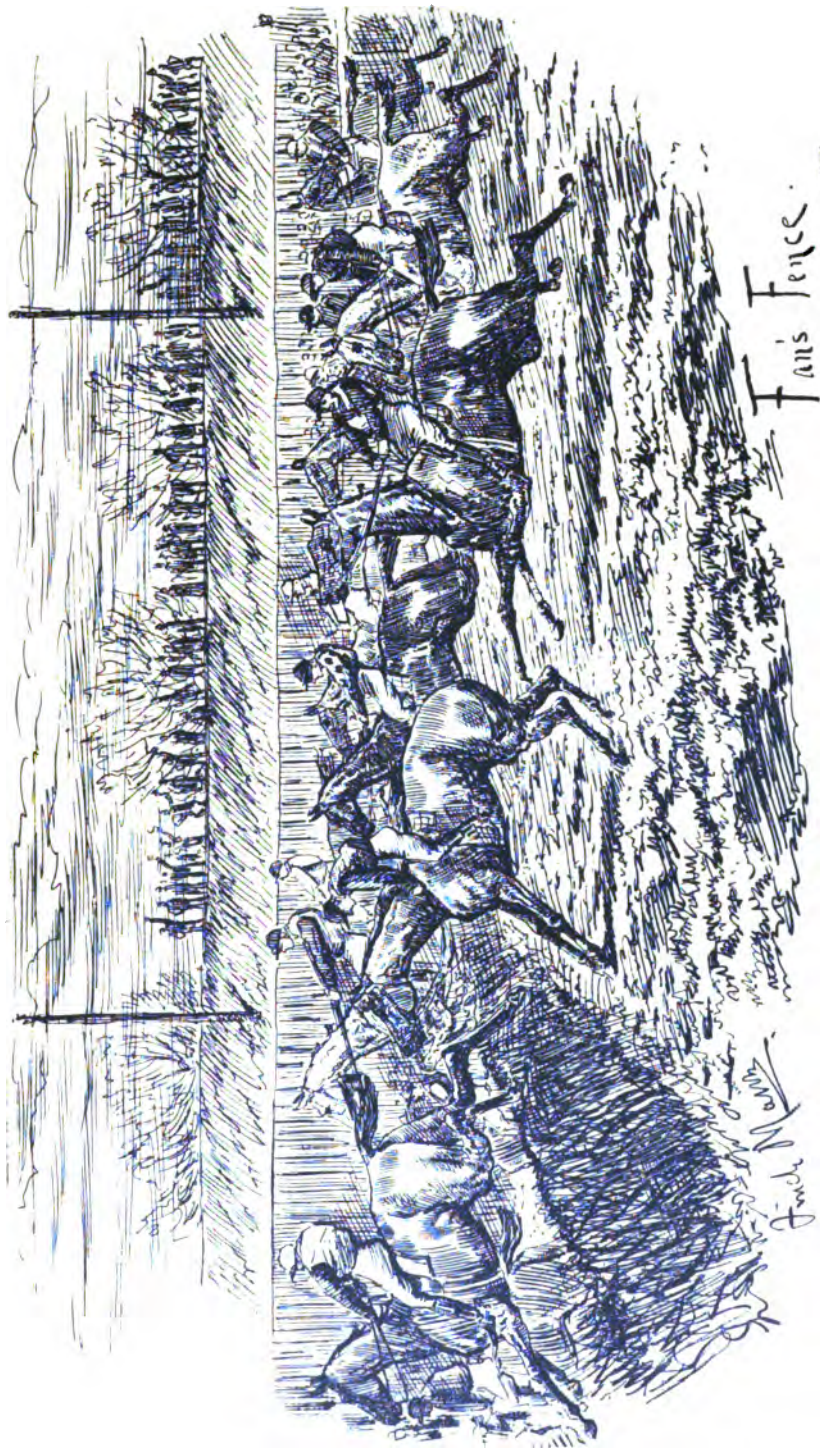
NOTES ON NOVELTIES.

T is announced in the preface to the first volume of 'The Fur and Feather Series,' published by Longmans, Green & Co., that the design is 'to present monographs as complete as they can possibly be made on the various English birds and beasts which are generally included under the head of Game;' and, assisted by the able editorship of Mr. Alfred E. T. Watson, it will be conceded that this aim has been fairly attained in the one that deals with the *The Partridge*. It commences with the natural history of the bird, learnedly, and at the same time interestingly, treated by the Rev. H. A. Macpherson. The pursuit and shooting of the partridge is dealt with by A. J. Stuart Wortley, than whom few better understand the subject in all its bearings, and he winds up his remarks with 'a word to the wise,' &c., which is worth taking to heart. As he has shown us how to bring the toothsome little fellow to bag, it is just as well to understand the various ways in which he can be cooked, which is exhaustively treated by George Saintsbury. The result of this collaboration will certainly commend itself to shooting men. The highly finished illustrations by A. J. Stuart Wortley, A. Thorburn, and C. Whympers, will still further recommend the work.

Horns and Hoofs, by R. Lydekker, treats of the various groups of Hoofed Big Game to be found in the four quarters of the globe, Asia and Africa being specially laid under contribution. Wild Oxen, Sheep and Goats, Antelopes, Deer, Pigs, and Rhinoceroses, in all their subdivisions and classifications, are the subjects of much careful research, and described in a plain and popular manner. Naturalists will surely revel in these pages, the geographical distribution and the zoological details being surprisingly diffuse; sportsmen, too, especially those who follow this class of game, and who for the most part are naturalists, will find interest in the description of the game they love to pursue. The artistic illustrations leave nothing to be desired. Horace Cox, Bream's Buildings, is the publisher.

'Purple Heather' has always a word of interest for gunners, and in the third edition of *Loads for Modern Game Guns* sportsmen will find much that will amuse as well as instruct. It is, too, a book that will be equally welcomed by the tyro and the expert. Alexander & Shephard are the publishers.

Jarrold & Sons, Warwick Lane, have just issued, on fine paper, bound in cloth, a new edition of *Black Beauty: The Autobiography of a Horse*, by Anna Sewell. This has resulted from the pronounced success of the cheap editions, which have had an enormous circulation, not only in this country and America, but in a translated form in France and Italy. The numerous clever illustrations by John Beer, in his well-known unconventional manner, form a feature of the book.



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FORES'S SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

TURF MEMORIES.

By 'TIM WHIFFLER.'

DON'T suppose that the Turf, ever since it became an institution of this country, ever had so many wealthy supporters as at the present time, and consequently, looking at it from a commercial point of view, it was probably never in a more prosperous condition. But, for all that, somehow, the 'romance' that was always more or less associated with the 'great game,' as its admirers love to call it, seems to have departed.

Fancy not caring to take the trouble to lead your horse back to weigh in, when he had won the Derby for you! But that is precisely what a wealthy sportsman of the period a few years back was guilty of.

Mr. Henry Chaplin was a cripple from an accident, and in consequence could only move about on crutches on the memorable day when Hermit won the most sensational Derby on record for him; but he hobbled down from the stand quick enough to meet his victorious horse, you may be sure; but then he was not built quite in the same way as the sportsman just spoken of. How often, too, after a big race does one read in the paper the next day that the noble owner was not present to see his horse run, being away fishing, or something of the sort. All the picturesque figures that one used to look for at the different race meetings as a matter of course but a very few years ago have disappeared, with but very few exceptions. One misses them sadly, for it was refreshing to look at them; they were 'landmarks,' so to speak.

Where is the equipage to be found on Newmarket Heath at a race-day nowadays to compare with the quaint-looking chariot the late Lord Stamford and his Countess were wont to drive

about in? Old Ben Bartholomew, the once-celebrated jockey, who kept the 'White Lion' at the 'top o' the town,' and who died but recently, was Lord Stamford's first trainer, riding for him as well, when he first went on the turf in a very small way indeed, and was never tired of telling anecdotes of things that took place during their connexion with each other—a connexion that was terminated, if I recollect right, by Ben being rendered '*hors de combat*' for a considerable period—for ever, as far as race-riding was concerned—by a dreadful fall he experienced when riding in the Goodwood Stakes the year Pretty Boy, ridden by Aldcroft, then a promising light-weight, won. Five horses were down all together, and two of the jockeys were killed on the spot. It was probably the worst accident that ever happened on a racecourse.

One anecdote old Ben was fond of telling was to the effect that one day when down at Enville he was returning through the park after a long walk with the sweaters on, having to get down some superfluous flesh, when one of the servants from the house met him with a message from my Lord saying he wished to see him at once. Accordingly, attired as he was, he proceeded straight to the billiard-room, where were Lord and Lady Stamford. After the business, whatever it was, had been discussed, Lady Stamford, addressing the trainer-jockey, said, jokingly, 'Ah, Mr. Bartholomew, I wish I was as thin as you are.'

'Do you, my Lady?' replied bluff old Ben. 'Then you should put on these here,' pointing to the flannels he was enveloped in, '*and have a good sweat.*'

How Ben Bartholomew came to be a jockey may, perhaps, not be generally known, and may be worth mentioning here. He was originally a farmer's boy, and a very small one, in the neighbourhood of Newmarket. One fine day, not long before one of the Autumn meetings, a trainer rode over to see his master, and, in the course of conversation, happened to mention that he was at his wits' end to know where to get a light-weight boy to ride for him in the forthcoming Cesarewitch. 'You haven't such a one on the premises, I suppose, that would do for what I want, have you?' he inquired.

The farmer answered by sending for little Ben, the result being that the trainer took him away with him there and then, and in process of time Ben Bartholomew came to be one of the most famous jockeys of his day. By all accounts, he seems to have been a bit of a butcher in his style of riding, but his

honesty was unimpeachable, and I fancy it is not too much to say that, though solicited on more than one occasion, he never did anything wrong in his life.

With the accident before mentioned, his riding career terminated, and he set up for himself as a Boniface at Newmarket, Mr. Harvey Combe, the brewer, one of his late masters, being exceedingly kind to him. '*Give Mr. Bartholomew credit up to a thousand pounds,*' was his order to the manager of the well-known brewery.

The fame of Ben Bartholomew's London stout spread far and wide, and the thousand was not long in being paid back, you may be sure. A cow had trodden on Ben's forehead when a child, leaving a very distinct mark of its hoof thereon. Many people in consequence attributed this scar to his Goodwood accident. I have seen it in print, indeed. Curious though it may seem, living, as he did latterly, within literally a stone's throw of the racecourse, he never went near the heath on race days, and never made a bet. In fact, though he delighted to be drawn out about his own experiences, he did not seem to take the least interest in what was going on in the racing world now that he had retired from active participation therein. Harry Jennings and the French horses always put up at the 'White Lion, and Peut Etre,' and many a famous winner went forth from Ben's stables to do battle on the Heath.

When Lord Stamford first took to racing, with a small stud under Bartholomew's superintendence, he seems to have had no desire to 'back his fancy' at all, and old Ben would relate how, with great difficulty, he persuaded his Lordship to invest a 'pony' on one of his horses for a race he was engaged in. Later on, as everybody knows, he became thoroughly inoculated with the gambler's fever, and, at last, there was no heavier bettor amongst the whole lot of them than Lord Stamford. He was very partial to Newmarket, and always made a point of driving into the town before a race meeting, on which occasion the church bells were set ringing by his orders. Then came the defeat of his mare, on whom he stood to win a fortune in the Cambridgeshire. Foul play was insinuated, with what truth it is not for us to say. But this it is, my Lord was so disgusted with the whole business that he for a while ceased to take an active part in racing. In course of time, however, he returned to his old love, and, if I remember rightly, Cambuscan, who was a prominent favourite in that Derby of giants won by Blair Athol,

was the next animal of importance that he owned. The last that he owned was the beautiful Geheimniss, bought from Tom Cannon, who won the Oaks, and was a hot favourite for the Leger, for which she ran second to Dutch Oven, supposed not to have a ghost of a chance, and who started at 40 to 1 or thereabouts.

It may be interesting to our readers to know that Lord Stamford's famous mare was christened by that well-known writer on turf matters, Mr. Henry Smurthwaite, the original 'Orange Blossom' of *Bell's Life*, who, being asked by Tom Cannon for a good name, at once suggested the appropriate and euphoniously sounding one of Geheimniss.

The eccentric Squire Heathcote, the owner of that 'old' Beeswing—everything was 'old' with him—he once troubled some one at a luncheon party for some of that 'old' sucking pig—with his hat stuck well on the back of his head, his red face and perpetual grin, was always a figure we delighted to run an eye over at a race meeting. He was an eccentric man, and the ring could not make him out sometimes, for one day he would bet away as if the Bank of England was at his back, the next, perhaps, he would not bet at all. Beeswing's win in the Chester Cup, we fancy, came very acceptably.

The Squire of the Durdans was a good one to ride, and we have heard men say that the pace he would make after the hounds down the Surrey Hills with a loose rein was something frightful to witness.

Mr. George Payne, too, with his perpetual black and white tic, braving the elements on the Heath, and in the thinnest of overcoats—when shall we see his like again?

Then there was Mr. Henry Saville. What more popular colours than the yellow jacket and red cap of the owner of Rufford Abbey? It says much for his staunchness to those about him, that, in spite of the earnest solicitations of his friends, he insisted upon letting Maidment, who always rode for him, have the mount on Cremorne for the Derby, at all hazards. That jockey well rewarded his master by winning it for him, though Tom Chaloner, coming with a rush on the post on the outsider, Pell Mell, made the backers of the favourite tremble in their shoes for the moment. It was, indeed, much too near a thing to be pleasant.

Another familiar figure we miss on the Heath is that of Tom Drake, perhaps one of the most popular country squires that ever existed. One of the supporters of Wadlow's stable, he

would have won his money on Sir Hugo when he won the Derby, you may depend. Chester does not seem the same thing when one looks up into the balcony, and fails to see the Squire of Shardeloes, and Sir Watkin, whose guest for the meeting he was, and had been for years, standing side by side criticising the horses as they canter down the course preparatory to taking part in the time-honoured race, the Chester Cup, or 'T' Coop,' as the natives call it.

Sir Charles Legard's is another face—and a good-looking one—that we miss. The last time we saw him on a racecourse in the capacity of owner was patting that good horse of his, *Vespasian*, after winning a race for him at Bath.

Sir Robert Peel was another sportsman refreshing to contemplate, as, in knickerbockers and high boots and inevitable chimney-pot hat of noble proportions, he stalked majestically about the enclosure at Newmarket at the autumn meetings.

Captain Bachelor, with his strongly marked features, was another landmark.

Where, again, for fine presence and good looks, would you match the late Lords Rosslyn and Westmorland. There were no more popular colours on the turf than the green and white when the 'affable' Earl, as the latter was called, and Jimmy Grimshaw carried all before them for a brief period.

Had an enterprising person offered a prize for the most eccentric 'get-up' in the sporting line, assuredly David Hope Johnstone would have won in a canter from all competitors. Of all of them, perhaps, his summer costume was the most striking, generally consisting, as it did, of a swallow-tailed coat and red tie, plaid continuations of a very defiant pattern, the whole topped up by a fluffy white hat. He owned one or two good horses in his time, notably *Sister Helen*, who won the Steward's Cup at Goodwood, and *The Leopard*, who was supposed to have an outside chance in the Derby. He was also a fine pigeon shot, and once landed a great coup in that line of business at Brighton during the race week at the International Gun and Polo Club. Saying nothing to any one, he went quietly down into the country for some weeks before the event came off, and practised his shooting assiduously, with the result that he was in great form on the day, and won hands down, winning, besides the stakes, a goodly sum in bets. How well we can remember witnessing a row between him and the late Sergeant Ballantyne at Evans's one night. It was shortly after

the first portion of the great Tichborne trial, and big David, who had evidently been dining, sitting at the end of the room all by himself with a huge cigar in his mouth, drinking brandy and water and listening to the little white-faced boys singing 'The Chough and the Crow,' was suddenly aware of the entry of the Sergeant, accompanied by some friends. He nodded to the former, and to his evident surprise got the 'cut direct' in return. Not a word did he say, until Sergeant Ballantyne, later on, got up to leave the room. David let him get half way to the door, then he sprang from his seat like a lion from his lair and strode after his man. Having harangued the Sergeant to his heart's content, in language more forcible than polite, he wound up by informing him that unless he received an apology the next day, he would shoot him like a dog.

Sergeant Ballantyne then slunk out of the room, presenting anything but a dignified appearance, and David, looking twice as big in his evening suit of sables than in ordinary attire, threw out his chest and proceeded to address the company in a neat speech, commencing, 'My name is David Hope Johnstone, and I belong to the Conservative Club. The last time I saw Sergeant Ballantyne he asked me for a tip for the Derby and I gave him one, and a dashed good tip too,' and so on, to the intense gratification of the grinning audience. Poor fellow, he died insane at last. His notion was that he was enormously rich, and he would implore his friends who came to visit him to take care of their money and save as much as possible.

Both he and his brother, Major 'Bob,' distinguished themselves very much in the Indian Mutiny, the latter being Sir James Outram's favourite *aide-de-camp*. At the capture of Delhi, bursting into a room in one of the palaces, he came across a small casket full of priceless jewels, which he hid away in a place of safety, as he thought. After the fighting was over, he came back to fetch it, but alas! to his mortification, he found that some one, a watchful native probably, had stolen a march on him, for the precious casket had disappeared, and poor Bob was done out of his loot. David and Bob Hope Johnstone, especially the former, were probably two of the most powerful men in the service, or out of it for the matter of that, and it is not difficult to imagine the short work they would make of any such rebels who were unlucky enough to get in their way. A daring hotel thief once entered David's room at the Rutland Arms at Newmarket, and stole his watch whilst he was asleep.

Needless to say, that, had his victim woke up during the operation, the thief would have had a roughish time of it. We doubt very much if he would have been permitted to leave the room by any other mode of egress than the window.

That the members of the Ring have, as a rule, pretty loud voices, may be taken as an acknowledged fact, but I don't think the noisiest of them could compete with old Mr. Kemster, who, attired in a dust-coloured suit and white hat, and accompanied by an elderly party similarly dressed, and smoking a clay pipe unceasingly, would roll out the names of the horses, with, apparently, the greatest possible unction. The pair were always in the outer ring, and being well known and popular, were always in request among small backers, notwithstanding that Mr. Kemster invariable laid a point or two less than you could get elsewhere. He was always the pink of politeness too, and his 'Thank you, Sir,' when he paid up after a race, was alone worth the money. Rather different to a well-known penciller of to-day, who we heard, not long ago, shout out after a race :— '*Now then, you "dirty dogs," come and be paid !*'

Another quaint figure that was familiar to most race-goers, especially at Newmarket, was that of Mr. James Barber, or 'Jemmy' Barber as he was generally called, with his dress coat buttoned across his chest, and his thick stick held in his ungloved hands. He had been a rich man once, like Newman Noggs, and had owned horses with the best of them, notably 'Fan,' a prominent favourite for the Grand National one year. The fences, so it was said at the time, were surreptitiously curtailed for her express benefit, without the desired effect, however, for she refused either the first or second fence, we forget which, and as she repeated the performance the following year at the same obstacle, it was promptly christened 'Fan's fence,' by which name it was known for some years after.

After the racing was over for the day, Mr. Barber would repair to his inn, and there he would sit and drink and sing for the whole of the evening, and sing uncommonly well too ; such ditties as 'John Barleycorn,' and those of the same sort, being his chief favourites. The chorus was always announced by him with a terrific bang of his fist on the table, which would set all the glasses upon it dancing on their own account.

A chequered career had been Mr. James Barber's, we suspect. He went racing to the last ; a small annuity keeping him going, we believe.

A much greater downfall than his was that of the once well-known and lucky Mr. Edward Brayley. At one time he did not seem to know how to lose, his horses winning in every direction, notably Mornington, who won the City and Suburban, beating Cremorne, and Casse Tête, who, ridden by Johnnie Page, carried off the Grand National. Teddy Brayley, or 'Old Boots' as he was called, was a most hospitable man when in the height of his prosperity, and very fond of theatricals and the player folk generally. The profession, including his friend Mr. Toole, were on Casse Tête to a man when she won, and again the following year when she lost. Her owner must have been at one time a very rich man; it is sad to think, therefore, that he should have died as he did a few years ago, out of his mind and an absolute pauper, in a miserable cottage on the top of Lansdown, near Bath.

A BOUT WITH A BRUIN.

By COULSON KERNAHAN,

Author of 'A Dead Man's Diary,' 'A Book of Strange Sins,' &c.



EVEREN years ago I found myself setting out for a small 'station' in the centre of Norway, to spend a month on the mountain, and, with every expectation of coming in for a share of bear-hunting. I had posted myself up in the localities where bears are still to be met with, I had engaged the services of a guide who was, I was told, the best-informed man in Norway upon the subject of bears, and where to find them; and as I had a gun which the gunsmith informed me was the deadliest instrument ever invented, and a shooting costume (I was young and foolish in those days), even more "killing," there was every chance of the bears having a warm time of it.

In spite of gun, guide, and 'get-up,' I never saw as much as the tail-end of a bear that season, whereas the next time I went to Norway, which was a couple of summers ago, I had two 'bangs' at a bear, concerning one of which I have already told the readers of *Fores's Sporting Notes and Sketches*, and the other of which I now propose to relate.

I was in the heart of the country, away from the beaten track, and had started one morning for a long walk across the mountains. I did not reach the *sæter* (mountain farm), where I had arranged

to put up, until 9 p.m., where there was a nice little dinner of trout, ryper (a kind of wild fowl), pancakes, and wild strawberries awaiting me. To this dinner I did ample justice, but the early hour at which I had risen, combined with the fresh air and fatigue, made me so drowsy that I almost fell asleep at table, and as I did not think it wise to go to bed so soon after a meal, I lit a cigar and went out to have a stroll on the mountain. Although it was past ten, there was light enough to read by, so I pulled out an old copy of the *Times* which I happened to have in my pocket, and sat down to tackle a speech by Mr. Gladstone. *That* settled it, and in about five minutes I was fast asleep and dreaming. How long I slept I don't know, but my cigar was still alight when I awoke. The dream I distinctly remember. I dreamt that I was lost on the mountains, and that my brother's retriever dog, Sancho, had found me, and was rubbing his cold nose against my face; and this rubbing it was which, combined with a strange odour, awoke me. I opened my eyes, looked lazily round, and saw the hind-quarters of an animal disappearing among some bushes. 'It was not a dream then, after all,' I said to myself; 'for there is Sancho, sure enough;' but in the next moment I remembered that I was in Norway, and that Sancho was at home in Norwood.

Somewhat startled, but scarcely knowing what to think, I sat up, rubbed my eyes, and took another glance at the retreating quadruped. '*That* Sancho!' I said; 'it can't be. Sancho is not half as big, and that—why, yes, by Jove! it's a bear, and he's been here too!' and with that I sprang to my feet, and set off excitedly in pursuit. It was perhaps a foolish thing to do, but the knowledge that the bear had found me asleep, and at his mercy, and yet had gone off peacefully enough, after taking stock of me and my surroundings, and the remembrance of the numerous tales I had heard about the cowardice of Norwegian bears, gave me temporary confidence. Bruin was trundling along leisurely enough in front, being evidently of opinion that I could have as little business with him as he with me, and that there was no need for either of us to trouble the other. When he heard my footsteps, however, he quickened his pace somewhat, and finally went off at a shambling trot, which left me some way behind. This added not a little to my stock of confidence, for seeing my foe thus turn tail I became prodigiously valorous, and went after him down the hill at a spanking pace. Just then he suddenly halted as if to look round—I tried, but unsuccessfully,

to come to a stop, and in the next moment caught my foot in the root of a tree, flung up my arms wildly in an unavailing effort to save myself, and was pitched head foremost almost at his feet.

When I looked up, which you may be sure was quickly, he was standing about two yards away, with his head stretched forward, and a look in his little eyes which I thought then was the most bloodthirsty I had ever seen, but which probably meant nothing more vicious than, 'A pretty fine fool you've made of yourself—haven't you?'

If I had had the sense or the presence of mind to lie quiet, I have no doubt that he would have gone away harmlessly enough; but all my courage had evaporated, and I fancied that he intended making a meal of me, then and there, so in hot haste I pulled out a revolver which I happened to have with me, loaded it with trembling fingers, and fired. I hit him just in the middle, and with a fearful roar he lifted up his paw as if to strike me. The look I saw in his eyes then *did* mean mischief, I can tell you, but I followed up my first shot with one which evidently took him in a vital place, for he flung up his forelegs almost as if they were arms, and apparently over-balancing himself, toppled backwards into the bushes. I did not stay to help him up. It would have been politer to have done so, I know, but it occurred to me that I was rather pressed for time just then, and could not afford to waste any more in bandying courtesies with strangers. I therefore arose—not altogether without haste—to retrace my steps to the *sæter*.

I might have spared myself the pains, however, for when the owner of the *sæter* and his son went back with me, after I had told them what had occurred, we found my friend the bear, lying all in a lump among the bushes—stone dead and still.

SMUGGLING BY PROXY.

By FOX RUSSELL.

THE yacht, *White Witch*, had come out of St. Peter Port, Guernsey, on the early morning tide, and at four o'clock of the same afternoon, she was still drifting aimlessly about, not far from the Casquets. We on board her had been devoutly hoping to hold the light breeze with which we started, throughout the day, but about

noon every ripple died away, and the sea presented that lake-like smoothness which is at once the delight of bathers, and the undoing of the yachtsman. The heat was terrific, and nobody felt the least inclined to do anything in the way of exertion.

Clad in the comfortable, if slightly insufficient, attire of a bath-towel apiece, a party of four men alternately sat on the deck and plunged overboard for a swim. There was a fifth on board, but he never did anything so undignified as to swim. This great personage was mine host's father-in-law, Sir Thomas Busted, a high and mighty official in the British Customs Department, who acted as a kind of male chaperone (or wet blanket) to the rest of us, especially keeping an eye on poor Tom Penn, whose yacht this was, and who had been compelled to include the fussy old gentleman in his party as a sort of tacit 'agreed price' for being allowed to come without his wife — 'a horrid man party,' as the lady politely put it. 'However, if papa goes, I suppose you won't get into any mischief,' she had added, with a sigh. Then we had Bobby and Billy Broughton, twins, so absurdly alike that their brother officers in the First Battalion of the ———th had vainly begged that one or other — they did not care, because they never could tell, which — would exchange, to prevent the occurrence of daily mistakes in identity. I, one of the great army of the Briefless, had completed the party by joining at Portland, the same day as the *White Witch* made her fourteen hour run across to Guernsey.

'No sign of a breeze, eh, skipper?' asked Tom of 'old wooden face,' our captain, who had been anxiously eyeing the Casquets for some time past.

'Not a sign, sir, nowhere,' was the answer.

'Well,' said Tom, turning to us, 'we are none of us in a hurry, and there's plenty of stuff on board to eat and drink — and smoke, too, for that matter.'

'Oh,' lisped Bobby, 'I have brough't about a ton of cigars on board, so we are all wight in that way. If we don't smoke 'em, I'll smuggle 'em ashore wherever we land, in——'

'Oh, shut up, you owl!' exclaimed poor Tom, in agonised accents, as the head of the great Customs Official at that moment appeared above the companion.

'Ah, boys, ah! still bathing, eh?' Isn't it rather foolish, now, to bathe so much? I remember in my young days, when I was out in the Mauritius——'

Whenever Sir Thomas got as far as 'when I was out in the

Mauritius,' his hearers, knowing precisely what was coming in the way of aged yarns, interspersed with the most hoary of grey-whiskered 'chestnuts,' prepared for flight. Penn saved us at this juncture, by jumping up and saying, 'Excuse me one moment, I must get my gun and have a shot at that puffin,' disappearing below as he did so. The rest of us had just one more plunge, and then came on board again, and retired to the cabin to dress. Devoutly did we all wish for a breeze that would land us anywhere on English soil, as Sir Thomas, with his confounded yarns, was to leave us and go by rail to London, whenever he could. He gave us, by dark hints, to understand that he had been summoned back to the deliberations of the Customs Board, but we came to the conclusion that a certain spell of sea-sickness he had lately gone through had considerably more to do with his projected retreat than business matters. Anyhow, so long as we were to get rid of him, it didn't matter a brass button what was the reason for his going.

Next day did not see us much further advanced upon our journey until about three in the afternoon, when a gentle breeze, shortly freshening to 'strong,' came up, and the *White Witch* was soon spinning through the water, with that delightful hissing sound, as her stem sharply cut the foam beneath her bows. Bobby Broughton had just come on deck with a huge packet of cigars, some of which he was offering to Tom and myself. The others were below at 'afternoon (?) tea,' taken, for the most part, out of tall tumblers, and involving a suspicious sound of popping corks.

'What was that you were saying yesterday about smuggling these cigars, Bobby?' asked Tom, leisurely lighting one at the same time. 'I had to shut you up, on the appearance of the Great Panjandrum on deck.'

'Oh, I only said I'd bought I don't know how many at Guernsey, and meant scoring off the Revenue Johnnies if I could, but I forgot at the time that the Great P. J.—our playful abbreviation for Sir Thomas's nickname—'was a Customs swell, or I wouldn't have done it. We'll give them all to the men, eh?'

Here Billy Broughton turned up, pulling away at a huge cigar. 'No, I'm hanged if we do, Bobby. I've got to like the things—'

'Aha, boys, smoking cigars before dinner, eh? Now, do you think that's a good thing to do? When I was in the Mauritius——' but at that moment, Tom let fall his match-box, spilling the contents, and dropping on his knees on the deck at once com-

menced picking them up, beseeching us to lend a hand in the task, and again we escaped the Mauritius anecdote.

Early the following morning, we were just within sight of the little Cornish harbour of Fowey, and reckoned upon making it in about two hours' time. Thereupon Sir Thomas began to fuss tremendously about Bradshaw, the A.B.C., and every other railway guide he could lay hands on. He got himself into his shore-going attire, and set the steward to work to pack up all his things for him, and it is needless to remark that we viewed these signs of departure with an unholy joy.

Now, as a matter of fact, Bobby was not the only one who had bought a large quantity of cigars in Guernsey. We were all 'tarred with the same brush.' I believe the spirit of smuggling is positively ingrained in Englishmen. It is not so much that they wish to avoid paying the duty, as it is the delight of having 'run a cargo' in even the humblest of ways. Truth to tell, the presence of the great Sir Thomas amongst us reprobates lent an added zest to the idea of 'scoring off' the Custom House officers. Unluckily for us, the old gentleman had become aware of our contraband possessions, and saw fit to air his opinions thereon, in the lucid intervals of his fussing round and making ready for the shore.

'Ah, my good fellows,' he said, in a patronising tone, 'you have a great deal too much tobacco, you know, here, for me to allow the matter to pass. It will be my duty—ah—to—ah—instruct the officers—I may say, *my* officers—ah—to search this boat for anything liable to duty!'

'Obnoxious old beast!' muttered Bobby, under his breath; 'that settles it. I'm blowed if we won't smuggle the lot, after that pretty speech.'

Bobby walked forrard to speak to Tom. Then they summoned the steward to their confab. The latter almost immediately disappeared again below, with a grin on his face which developed into a loud guffaw, as soon as he supposed himself to be out of hearing. The Great Panjandrum strutted up and down the deck, swelling visibly with importance, as, flying the 'foreign' flag we stood into the river. He fairly revelled in the idea that whereas, under such circumstances, ordinary mortals are prohibited from leaving their yachts to go ashore until the Customs men have come off to them, he—Sir Thomas Busted—would, by virtue of his exalted position, go the moment the anchor was dropped.

'Really, my dear boy, sorry to hurry your men, but it is of the last importance to the Board that I should be in town as soon as possible. Their deliberations are so much time wasted, absolutely wasted, without me. Great nuisance, of course, but I really must catch this train. Goodbye, goodbye!'

Thus spake the mighty man as he hurried over the side into the gig.

'Goodbye, Sir Thomas. Awfully sorry to lose you, of course, but duty, as you say, eh? Yes; well, the steward will carry your luggage ashore for you. It's all right under that tarpaulin there. Give my love to Alice, and tell her to enjoy herself,' was Penn's answer, and the gig was rowed rapidly away.

They pulled in to the steps, where the Customs officials met them in hot indignation. This was the Great P. J.'s opportunity. Rising in the stern of the gig, and nearly losing his balance as he did so, he waved one hand airily, whilst with the other he grasped his own precious Gladstone-bag.

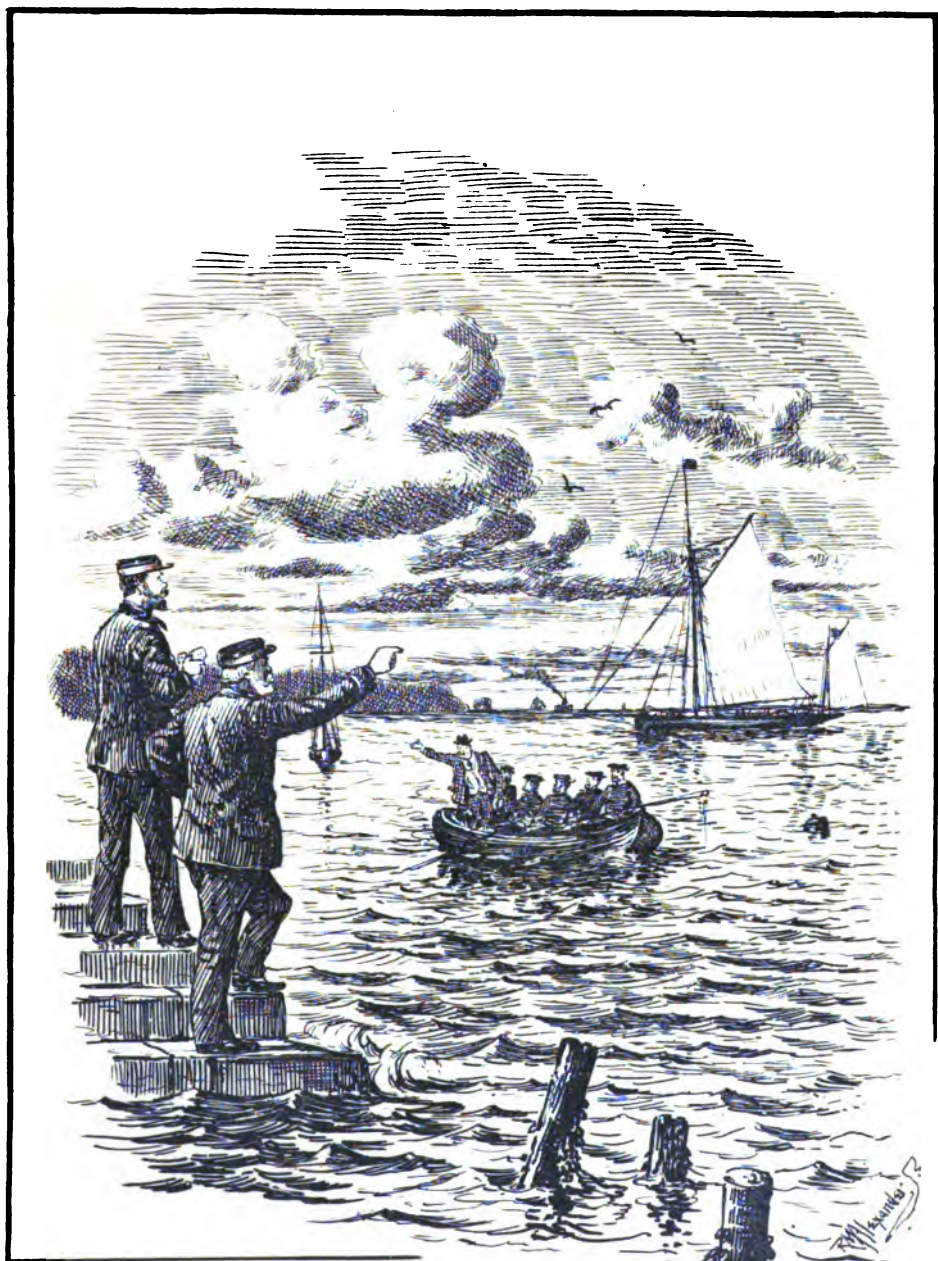
'It's all right, my men. I am—ahem—Sir Thomas Busted!'

and the old gentleman looked round at the Customs men to watch the effect which the announcement would have upon them.

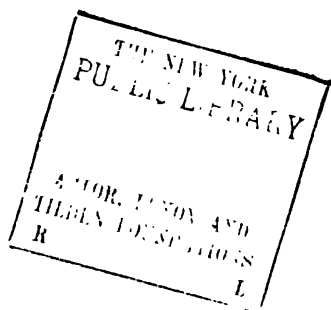
'Oh, beg pardon, Sir Thomas, I'm sure,' said the foremost. 'Of course that's all right. Going to the train, Sir Thomas? Yes, sir! certainly, sir! We will see the luggage up there all right; but there's over an hour to wait yet, sir. No need to make any search of this yacht, Sir Thomas, I suppose, as you have just come off her?' and the Customs man rubbed his hands and smiled in a deprecating manner.

'I by no means say that; by no means!' replied Sir Thomas pompously; 'on the contrary, there are young Army men on board who have a large quantity of cigars in their possession. I therefore request that you will thoroughly overhaul her, although I myself have travelled in her. She belongs to my son-in-law; but even relationship to *me* shall never be used as a protection. Do your duty, officer, do your duty! When I was in the Mauritius—,' and here followed a yarn which the unhappy man had, perforce, to listen to, as it was being spun by his superior. When the old gentleman had finally blown off the steam upon his subordinate's defenceless head, they made a move for the railway station, Sir Thomas still carrying his treasured bag himself.

Before they had got far on the road the great man turned to.



'It's all right! I am - ahem - Sir Thomas Busted!'



the Customs official and said, 'The steward here will accompany me to the station. Do you and your assistants go back and run your eye carefully over those on board the *White Witch*.'

The man touched his cap, and started off back again.

Arrived at the station, Sir Thomas told the steward to inform the station-master who he—Sir Thomas—was, and to secure a first-class compartment for him. This was done, and then his multifarious possessions were stowed in hat racks and on spare seats, the precious Gladstone close beside him. Just as the guard blew his whistle, the steward wrenched open the carriage-door, and exclaimed, in apparent dismay—

'Oh, Sir Thomas, I've made a mistake! I've not packed your things in this' (collaring the Gladstone bag, and hauling it out, despite old Busted's furious efforts to retain it) 'at all. This is the bag holding all your papers,' indicating another bag which had lain artfully *perdu* on the hat-rack overhead. The steward banged to the door, the train steamed out of the station, and the last seen of Sir Thomas was a face, purple with rage and mystification, and arms wildly gesticulating out of the carriage window.

The steward marched leisurely off with the cherished Gladstone bag, which contained the whole of the cigars jointly owned by us on board the yacht.

The trick had been very simply managed. The steward, acting under Penn's orders, had stuffed all our cigars into the old gentleman's pet bag, removing the proper contents thereof to another one, belonging to Bobby Broughton. Sir Thomas had, in this way, gaily carried them all ashore himself, and was unwittingly waving them about under the official nose, the while he ill-naturedly desired the Customs man to search the yacht for any such goods.

Our steward waited until the rummaging of the yacht was concluded, and then calmly returned on board with the spoils of victory.

That night, after dinner, we overheard him telling the men in the fo'c'sle the whole joke, at which they roared. The steward wound up with:

'Yes, the Great Pan-damned-Rum, as they called him, did the trick properly. He "ran the cargo" himself.'

DAYS AFOOT WITH THE DEVON AND SOMERSET STAG-HOUNDS.

By CHARLES SQUIRE.

I.

MANY riders, good men and true, will read this headline with a smile. Nevertheless, those who follow the hounds on foot are not to be numbered by hundreds only, but by thousands. And the passion for, and the joy in such things is not of one year's growth, nor of a hundred, nor is it a fashion which may perish, but the satisfaction of an eternal, primitive instinct. And, possibly, those who put their trust 'in the strength of the horse' may be interested in seeing their favourite sport through another's spectacles, and in the side-light of another's experience.

There are some forms of hunting, for example, otter hunting, and the chase of the hare with beagles, which are followed almost entirely on foot; and we have the authority of the 'Immortal' and much-quoted 'Jorrocks' for the statement that 'a man tramping along a 'igh road with a pipe in 'is mouth and a thick stick in 'is 'and, is "well mounted for 'arriers."

'Poor is the triumph o'er the timid hare' even to a follower on foot, and in course of time the novice wearies of a chase ever running in circles over a limited area of ground, and yearns for the larger excitement and ampler scope which the chase of fox and deer affords. Here he leaves the Commonplace and enters the realms of the Unlikely, and, in the opinion of others, the Absurd and Impossible. With a larger and swifter game, larger horizons open before him, greater calls are made upon his endurance, watchfulness, and knowledge of 'woodcraft'—the triumphs are greater, the disappointments are in proportion. And added to this, there is something of a gambler's hopes and fears: more than the proverbial 'spice of uncertainty' which is the salt and savour of life.

There is a time for speed and a time for standing idle. The game is often won by 'masterly inactivity,' and the nicest discrimination is necessary to judge the exact moment when to

fling aside 'Fabian tactics,' to leave the hill and descend to the valley. For it is not, as might be supposed, the shortest chase which is most favourable to the runner. A weak or spiritless fox, or a heavy deer which turns to bay after a short scurry, upsets all his calculations. What suits him best is a long run, not straight (and, contrary again to general ideas, a straight run is not of very common occurrence), but in a semi-circle or a series of turns and doubles. These the watcher upon the hills can see and unravel, either with his natural sight, or with a field-glass; and so, moving this way and that, edge constantly closer to the chase, so as to be near at hand when the hunted beast is ready to succumb to his pursuers.

Also 'he must marke how the wind standeth, and ever keepe downe the same, or at least the side winde of the houndes. If he once loose the winde of the houndes, he is very like to loose the sporte for that daye, if it be in the plaine or fielden country.'

Sweet as is the triumph of the successful finish to a long chase, when the intelligence of a man has been matched against the speed of horses—its frequent disappointments are bitter in proportion. And they are hard to bear, and no amount of philosophy can render one callous to them, when after a long day of watching and waiting in wind and rain the false step is made, when from behind the opposing hill you hear the roar and thunder of the chase as the deer is driven up and down the water, and when the shrill blast of the horn and the huntsman's death-halloo tell you that all is over and that the cup of success has been dashed from your lips when it seemed well within your grasp.

'O the little more, and how much it is!

And the little less, and what worlds away!'

But apart from the sport itself, the beauty of the country in which they find a home should draw many a man to the chase of the wild deer. There he may roam over miles of purple heather or descend into the mystical silences of Horner or Haddon Woods. The rivers sweep through charming scenery, whether you follow their course through the woods and meadows, or from some 'vantage point' watch them gliding like silver snakes from distance to distance. And though rains beat and winds buffet, the pureness of the air makes it unlikely that any harm can accrue. 'Allah adds to a man's life days spent in hunting.' So runs an Arab proverb. Such days are

given freely over and above the term Destiny allots. The man wrests them from Death by labour of limb and lung.

To enlarge upon the beauty and stateliness of the red stag, would be a task probably more congenial to myself than to my readers. It would be to tell an old tale—'to gild refined gold and to paint the lily.' And moreover, to compete with all who have touched upon the subject. For ages the 'tall deer' have been almost a cult with those whose hearts are in the woodlands. Kings and Princes have not scorned comparison with this kingly beast.

'As high above other lords
Did Helgi bear him
As an ash tree's glory
From the thorn ariseth;
Or as the stag,

With the dewfall sprinkled
Is far above all
Other wild creatures,
As his horns go gleaming
'Gainst the very heavens.'

And in another Norse song, Sigurd ranks above others 'as a high-limbed hart over hurrying deer, or as glede-red gold over gray silver.'

And the last stronghold of the noble beast is worthy of it. Rolling wildernesses of yellow moor, steep combs clad with bracken and the honey-sweet heather, miles of oak-coppice clothing steep hills—running down to brawling mountain streams.

But 'Red Deer Land' has, during the last half-century, lost much of its wildness. There are, or were until very recently, men living who could remember the time when no fence existed between Dulverton and Porlock; now cultivation has succeeded in snatching a scanty harvest from much of the grudging and reluctant soil. But though much of the wilderness has been semi-civilised into coarse and poor pasturage, the Forest of Exmoor, a rolling steppe-like plateau of about 20,000 acres, at an elevation of 1500 feet, still bids defiance to the onward march of agricultural progress.

Close together on Exmoor rise the twin rivers Exe and Barle, and gradually widening in their journey south towards the Channel, as gradually approach each other to join about two miles below Dulverton, where the Barle becomes merged in the narrower but deeper Exe. It is of the plateau between them I write.

'O the Land of Exe and Barle,' wrote Richard Jefferies, 'it is the land of paradise.'—A paradise of wild natural beauty, of moor and wood and dancing water, and, above all, a veritable

'happy hunting ground' for the pedestrian sportsman. And this because of the peculiar contour of the country.

The theatre of these exploits—the one place where the pedestrian has a fair chance of watching the progress of the chase from find to kill, is of no great extent, being a triangle about seven miles from the apex to the base, which itself measures about four miles. The hills slope down abruptly—on one side to the Exe, on the other to the Barle. Crowned with heather upon its summit, the land gradually rises from the steep valley, severing it from Pixton Park. Along this valley runs a road leading from Dulverton (Dôl-ford-ton, 'the town at the ford at the bend of the river' Barle) to Hele Bridge, spanning the Exe. Just below Hele Bridge, the Exe receives a tributary, the Haddeo, running down through a forest-clad gorge of wonderful beauty.

In thus briefly describing the features of the district, my object has been not only to bring the events to be described more vividly before the reader. It is the peculiar form of the country—the rivers converging to a meeting-point and the wood-clothed heather-capt plateau dividing them, which makes it possible for a person hunting upon foot to see so much of, and to enter so fully into, the sport. And for this reason.

The hunted deer, whether red or fallow, looks upon running water as his 'trump card' to aid him in baffling his foes. To the nearest stream he turns, when 'heated in the chase,' and after splashing through the river, or lying down in a deep pool, continues his flight with renewed vigour. Later on, when speed fails him, he will hide himself under the shadow of the bank, entirely immersed except his muzzle, whilst the baffled pack pass and repass, or follow miles down stream upon the false scent which the current carries down with it. And, when all fails, it is to the nearest water he turns, to fight his last fight against overwhelming odds.

So that a stag found in the covers of the Haddeo will most probably cross over to the Exe, and if the pack are not close behind him, will 'beat the water' up stream or down. Then, dislodged from this refuge, he may scale the hill-side and cross the three miles of heather and rough grass which lie between him and the Barle. In the majority of cases, he will follow the downward course of this river, breaking out at Marsh Bridge, where he comes in contact with the first signs of civilisation and the town of Dulverton. A scurry across Court

Down brings him again to the Exe, and within a short distance of his starting-point in Haddon.

This, of course, is a 'line' ideal from the point of view of the runner to staghounds, though it is not an uncommon one. From the two 'points of vantage' mentioned below, almost the whole course of the run would lie before him—a walk from Lousy Gate to Court Down—from Court Down to Lousy Gate, placing all the country beneath his ken. Court Down is well known to both sportsmen and sight-seers, and when the hounds meet in the neighbourhood of Dulverton, the little common is covered with carriages, foot-people, and riders who prefer a 'bird's-eye-view' of the chase to the dangers and fatigues of following closely upon the hounds. And in most cases their foresight and perseverance are rewarded.

'For on this little knoll, if anywhere,
There is good chance that we shall hear the hounds
Here often they break covert at our feet.'

The other point, Lousy Gate, to wit, commands the valleys of Exe and Haddeo as Court Down does those of Exe and Barle.

Let me take two days in the Autumn of 1891, both falling within a week, unusually full of incident and variety, and revolving around our second point of vantage, as round a pivot.

II.

High above the coach-road and the brawling Barle hang the thick shades of Ellars Wood, and ever and anon the wild deer make their home there, almost within sight, on one side of the railway, and on the other of the white town of Dulverton. But its solitudes are rarely disturbed save by woodcutters, and at times the music of the fox-hounds as they drive their game southward towards Brushford or Bampton. But to-day a time of reckoning has come for the tall deer, and the stag-hounds have met at Dulverton.

Before noon the 'tufters' have roused their quarry. A few turns up and down show him that there is no safety in so small a covert. He scrambles upon the bank—thence leaps into the road, and then, crossing the field and splashing through the river, emerges upon the opposite bank and is lost to view in the recesses of Pixton Park. The pack are in kennel close at hand, and no long period elapses before they stoop to the

scent and are away. The great cavalcade of riders (for all Dulverton is *en fête* and astir) jostle each other as they race up the drive to the top of the park with all the dust and thunder of a cavalry charge. The thud of hoofs almost drowns the deep but intermittent music of the hounds. In a few moments they are lost to sight, and only the wreathing dust-clouds tell of the change.

We follow. At the top of the hill a fresh view opens before us. Another river—the Exe—winds through fertile meadows, shut in on either side by high wooded hills. Up-stream and away to the right ‘high placed upon a hill’ gleams in the sun the white house of Baron’s Down, and behind it, though we see neither dense wood nor heathery dome, lies Haddon. Towards Haddon streams the hunt, swiftly vanishing from our sight. It seems a long way to the bridge at Weir and a still longer walk to attain the rising slope whither the hunt has gone. But, in reality, it is neither very far, nor is the climb more than usually arduous. In half an hour we stand upon Lousy Gate and all the woods of Haddon at our feet.

For a time we hear nothing. The forest-clad valley up which the hunt has swept gives no sign of life or movement. Far away at the head of the gorge lie the blue hills of Brendon, towards which it may be that the stag is still heading. But we stand silent, every ear intent, and before long our hearts leap and pulses quicken as we hear sounds telling us unmistakeably that the chase has turned towards us.

Down the river comes the cry, piece-meal and fragmentary, choked and stifled, as it were, by the thick undergrowth. No horsemen can be seen, but the beat of hoofs resounds from the road far below us. Then a sonorous holloa and the scream of a shrill whistle. The harboursman, ever to the front, has viewed the stag in the river.

And now we see the hounds storming along a narrow strip of meadow. They pass like a mist wreath and vanish into the thickness of the woods. Then—shouts on every side, the ringing blast of the horn; then a crash of hound-music as they view their quarry. We stand upon the hill, irresolute. What is to be done? . . . That the stag, after but one hour’s chase, is ready to succumb, we can hardly believe. And if we descend into the valley, we may have the long slope of the hill to climb again, whilst the hunt sweeps out to Pixton—to the Barleside—perhaps to far-off Bampton. And yet * * * the clamour of the

pack comes surging up to us, 'like the smoke of a furnace.' The valley re-echoes with it, high hill cries to high hill, 'all Olympus roars,' and sounds of horn, holloa and whistle, are almost drowned in the swell of that vast sonorous chorus. At every moment we expect to hear it die away, to be followed by the death-cry, 'Whoo'-whoop!' There is an aged man, weather-beaten by some three-score years and ten of Exmoor storm and sunshine, standing by. 'They will kill him?' we ask anxiously, 'Very like,' is his reply. In another moment we three have scrambled through the hedge and are flying down the narrow stony lane.

Still the wild clamour rises. We are not too late to witness 'the fall of the deer.' One of us, in advance, sees a brown body splashing up and down the water, followed by savage hounds, longing to attack, but dreading to come within the sweep of those murderous antlers. But, as we run up, the stag leaves the river, and the pack, silent now, flash in long line across the grass. The crowd of horsemen jostle each other into the road, and as we stand with hearts throbbing and breath quickened from our mad rush, the beat of hoofs grows fainter and fainter.

So Fortune, fighting against us, has prevailed. We have thrown the die and . . . lost the game? Not yet. Hope, which must be the guiding star of the foot-hunter, whispers that all is not yet over.

The journey from Bury to the Minehead Road is not a pleasant one. The dust of the cavalcade still hangs heavily over the road, now deserted save by a few pedestrians like ourselves, a belated horseman, and a trap-full of holiday folk, whose fortunate condition arouses pangs of envy in our breast. Before we emerge from the 'Lady's Drive,' to see the river below us and Pixton looming in front, a grand crash of music thrills every nerve and puts fresh vigour into our exhausted limbs.

Again the stag has turned to bay, and amidst a deafening chorus of hound and holloa, plunges and splashes in the stained and turbid waters of the Exe. One or two of the boldest of the pack are already swimming in the river, but are barely able to stem the swollen flood in which our quarry stands. The remainder of the hounds thunder at him from the bank, whilst the huntsman, cap in hand, urges them on to the attack. And now they too are struggling against the current, whilst the deer, too exhausted now to leave the water, staggers and

scrambles up stream. But veterans of the pack, wiser than their fellows, have gained the bank, and, racing some fifty yards above their quarry, leap into the river, and float down to meet the stag. And now, 'hemmed in, besieged, not the least opening left,' he turns upon his foes, dealing tremendous blows with his brow-antlers to right and left. But numbers overpower him—some fasten upon his haunch, others, more daring, upon his neck. The swift current of the river also fights against the deer. The weight of his assailants drags him down, and his limbs fail him on the slippery bed of the stream. Game to the last, the gallant beast sinks down, his savage foes crowd in upon him, and his noble head is plunged beneath the waters. For a moment he re-appears—then vanishes again, hidden beneath the worrying pack. And it is a drowned carcase which is dragged to shore. There is no need of the huntsman's knife to complete the work of death.

The broad meadow is full of figures, eager spectators and horsemen standing idly by their horses. A dense ring surrounds huntsman and whip as they perform the funeral rites, and on its outskirts, small boys and curious strangers 'gather like flies about the sacrifice.' Already, enthusiastic novices, proud of their baptism of blood, go about with smeared faces. And now the moment has come for the hounds to receive the reward for which they have toiled. The circle breaks up, as the huntsman with hands held high, hurls the quivering mass of flesh far in front of him. It falls with a splash into the river, to be surrounded in a moment by the amphibious pack. It resembles the last scene in an otter hunt, save that, in this case the quarry vanishes as if by magic, torn asunder and devoured in the twinkling of an eye.

And now the slain monarch is dragged along by willing hands, and, not without effort, lifted into a dog-cart destined to convey it into the town of Dulverton, there to be beheaded, skinned and dismembered. It is a pitiful sight to see the limbs so lissom not long before, stiffened and rigid, the gaping cavities in chest and belly, and the wild eyes glaring ghastly in the light of the sun. But such feelings are lost in admiration as we notice the grand sweep of the dead beast's antlers. Coal black, save the points of the tines, which gleam white with the whiteness of polished ivory, wide-spreading and set like a tiara above the brow over which the rough, ruddy hair curls and ripples. This, with the sharp contour of the muzzle, gives a wildness to

the head not often seen in red deer. The day was yet young, and the unusually short gallop had not given complete satisfaction to the great 'field' which generally assembles upon 'the Dulverton day.' So after a brief, but welcome interval for refreshments, the woodlands of Haddon were again roused from their silence by the sharp 'chiding' of the tufters as they strove in vain to force some old and cunning stag to leave his stronghold. Then the threatening clouds closed in and sent down a thick misty drizzle. Many deer had been disturbed as the chase roared down the valley a few hours before, and at seven o'clock the approach of night rendered hunting impossible.

III.

But Haddon was destined to yield another victim before the season closed, and the last-advertised meet in mid-October, saw the hounds at the well-known *rendezvous* upon the hill. The 'fall' was late that year, and the vast woodlands had only just begun to put on their autumn glories. Beautiful, exceedingly, are Haddon Woods when the first keen frosts of winter have clothed them in red and orange, when the fitful sunshine and the cloud-shadows come and go across them, and the dark brown of Haddon stands out in contrast to the distant blue of Brendon.

Rumours came to us on Lousy Gate from 'the other side' of the rousing of a giant stag—a quick find and early start—of many deer afoot and much division amongst the pursuers, but later in the day there was more cheering news—the stag, 'twas said, had gone over Baron's Down to the Exe, and the pack would be laid on. There was a great rush of horsemen to Lousy Gate, and under Bury Castle the road was crowded. The huntsman's horn rang up from the valley beneath, 'there was mustering in hot haste' and a great confusion, out of which we slipped dextrously and gained the grounds of Baronsdown.

The sharp, fierce 'chiding' of the hounds filled Exe Cleave as they drove their game forward, and, level with them, upon the high ground above the cover, galloped a long line of horsemen.

All this time the rain fell in pitiless, drenching showers, followed by brief gleams of sunshine and fair weather. Dunkery and the Exmoor range stood out mauve and lilac in the sun-burst, then stark and gray against a gray sky—for a time—to disappear at last, swallowed up by the driving storm.

And now it seemed that we had gained little by leaving the Haddeo for the Exe, for the rousing of fresh deer caused the pack to divide, and in the confusion that ensued, 'the great stag' had quietly 'laid up' in some bramble-clothed hollow or patch of thick bracken, whilst his pursuers, chasing hinds or young stags, threaded the woods and fields, one detachment drawing many of the impatient riders across the plateau to the Barle at Marsh Bridge. Later in the day the pack, collected from their lawless pursuits with infinite trouble, came upon the old stag as he lay concealed. Fresh from his rest, he left the woods, the chase swept down the valley and turned in leftwards towards Haddon. So we left our point of vantage under Bury Castle and entered the 'lady's drive' leading to Bury.

The long Haddeo road lay before us, and the day was fast dying. But 'Haddon' is always a lure to lead us on, for in its vast woodlands a beaten stag will double to and fro whilst strength remains, hoping either by some subtle trick of cunning to confuse the scent or to beat up some weaker deer to take his place. So we went forward, still hoping many things.

Beyond Bury we heard the beat of hoofs upon the road, and two horsemen rounded the corner. Then we addressed eagerly, and our hearts sank within us at their reply. The stag, they said, had 'gone out over' to Deer Park, and all hope of meeting hounds again must be abandoned.

But, as they spoke, the river mantled with a turbid stain of brown—a sign we knew well how to interpret.

And then, as if rising from the earth, the huntsman stood before us in the road, man and horse rigid as a statue, and an instant later his 'view-holloa' rang down the valley, followed by the hoarse, sonorous baying of a hound.

We ran to the spot and there saw a sight not quickly to be forgotten. Below us, knee-deep in the flood, stood our quarry, erect and defiant, with head held high and antlers flung proudly back, whilst three hounds, the leaders and fore-runners of the pack, clamoured wrathfully from the bank, not daring to attack, but holding the foe at bay until reinforcements should arrive. And as these came up, the stag, not yet beaten, made for the bank at its lowest part, and scrambled again on to dry ground. Now the whole pack had assembled, and bore down upon their quarry, hoping to take him at a disadvantage. A moment sooner, and stag and hounds would have been rolling and tumbling, a confused mass, in the river, and my tale ended.

But they were that moment too late—down came the slashing brow-antlers, clearing a path to right and left, and, but a yard before the leaping pack our deer crashed down the river-bank, truly in sore plight. The horsemen rattled down the road—we struggled on with throbbing hearts and weary limbs, whilst more than once a crash of hound-music told us unmistakeably that the stag was once more at bay. Again and again he took to the river—each time to break away through the pack, with a little respite from death gained by his bath and breathing-space. During this, the sun had sunk behind the hills, and gathering darkness clothed hill and valley with shadow. Then the moon swam up above the trees, surrounded by a misty halo, prophesying rain. When we arrived at the little village of Bury, the chase had some time preceded us into the darkness. The stag (we were told) had, as usually happens ‘gone over to the Exe’ so we took the nearest road thither.

A short walk brought us to the river valley. We listened and waited. The sharp blast of the horn rang out from Hele Bridge Wood. Were they calling off?... But no! we heard the ‘opening’ of a hound and the huntsman’s cheer. They moved higher up the valley. We followed on the road. All the country-side was shrouded—there were no stars, and the sickly light of a watery moon barely severed the hill-tops from the sky.

All this time the hounds were rustling through the woods, running swiftly and silently upon the now burning scent, relentless as Fate, ‘cruel as the grave.’

A cheer thrilled through us, close at hand. The stag was in the water. Then the roar and thunder of the pack, louder, fiercer and more sonorous than I have ever heard it, seemed to fill earth and sky. Nearer it came, then, faintly outlined dark against the dark, over-hanging bank, the stag, at bay for the last time, passed before us like a shadow. White mists arose from the reeking fields and swollen river—through them men and horses loomed large like shrouded phantoms. It was a strange, wild scene—a hunt in shadow-land.

A cloud hid the moon as the deer came back again, turned and driven by his pursuers. We heard the wave and the splash as the stream parted before him, but the blackness revealed nothing to our eyes. All the time the music of the hounds rolled around us. For twenty minutes the gallant beast held all his foes at a distance, but at last a sudden silence told

us that the end had come. Somewhere—a little below where we stood, a lasso deftly thrown, had entangled the poor beast's antlers, and, dragged helpless to the bank, he had yielded up his throat to the knife.

Four men dragged his carcase through the ford—they laid him out upon a chequered square of moon-light, for the intervening cloud had now rolled away—and proceeded to perform the last rites of the slain. The small band who had followed the varying fortunes of a long and difficult chase, a triumph of wood-craft and 'hound-work,' gathered round and admired the great bulk and massive antlers of the finest stag which the season had yielded. 'Brow, bay and trey' on each antler culminated in one case in a perfect cup, surrounded by four sharp points, and in the other by two spreading bough-like tines.

And as I stood and pondered upon the strangeness of the scene, my companion re-called me to this prosaic world, for to him the 'still small voice' of prudence had whispered that it was not too late (what a finish to so wild a chase!) to catch the last train.

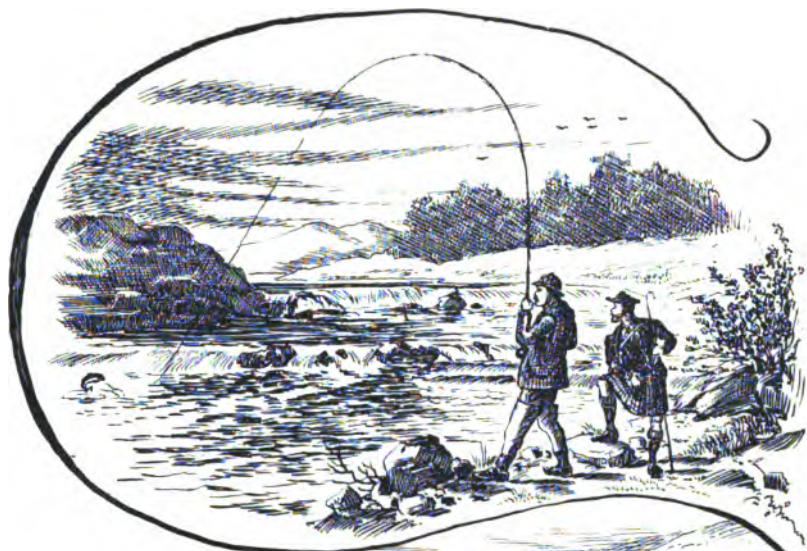
THE CASTLE POOL.

By MAURICE NOEL.

TWAS many years ago in Caledonia, and when
 There was not any rush to rent a Highland moor or glen,
 That, as he travelled in the North, Sir Ferdinand was shown
 The hospitality that now is hardly ever known.
 An invitation to the North was worth the having then :
 A sportsman, worthy of the name, was passed from glen to glen,
 From chief to chief, and everywhere he met with open house,
 And worked his wicked will upon the salmon, deer, and grouse.
 'Twas long before these trying times in which the iron way
 Invades the solitudes, and pushes on from day to day :
 These trying times, when all who can, for 'tis the thing to do,
 Must buy a gun, and rent a moor, and salmon river too !
 Well, *tempora mutantur*, so we'll let the matter rest,
 And only say 'Sir Ferdinand knew Scotland at its best.'
 And as with gun and rifle he was handy on the hill,
 And worked the gaudy salmon-fly with more than common skill,
 Was always pleasant company, and in his very prime,
 He found a welcome everywhere, and had a splendid time.

An invitation came to him one season when in town,
 Which said the river was in flood, and bade him hurry down,
 And bring along his waders, and his tackle strong and fine,
 To battle with the salmon that were running from the brine.
 As fast as he could travel—and that was not very fast—
 He made his way to Scotland, and he reached the lodge at last ;
 And in the smoking-room at night, with envy and with joy,
 He listened to the jargon that all fishermen employ.
 He learned the weight of all the fish that had been lately gaffed,
 And when a certain quantity of whiskey had been quaffed,
 He noticed (and with fishermen 'tis just the same to-day),
 The weights began increasing in a most alarming way !
 Now, as they told their stories, it was plainly to be seen,
 That competition, all among the lot, was very keen ;
 And he was very quickly filled with emulation too,
 And thought, ' I soon will let the fellows see what I can do !'
 And when at last he got to bed, and reached the ' Land of Nod,'
 He dreamed a fish of fifty pounds was straining at his rod.
 But Fortune did not smile on him ; no monster came his way ;
 He never found himself the envied hero of the day.
 The ladies never gathered round, his bonnie fish to praise,
 For some one always cut him out, and this went on for days.
 At last, his trusty gilly—Duncan Cameron by name—
 As keen as he, and thirsting just as eagerly for fame,
 Spoke softly of a ' saumon ' in the Castle Pool that lay,
 And said, ' He do be risin' vara early in the day ;
 And if, the morn, Sir Ferdinand wad like to try a cast,
 I do be thinkin' he wad land a muckle fush at last.'

Next morning then, so early, our baronet arose,
 And left his chamber silently, and walked upon his toes ;
 ' For if I fail,' he wisely thought, ' it will be just as well
 The jokers here should never know I've met with such a sell !'
 Then quickly to the Castle Pool he took his eager way,
 And Duncan met him, and remarked, ' The mornin's unco gey.'
 But as it would be difficult the Highlander to find
 Who *could* allow that matters were exactly to his mind,
 Sir Ferdinand was undismayed, and sent his tempting fly
 To every nook and corner where a salmon ought to lie.
 Again he fished the water down, but vain was all his toil,
 He never felt a fish, nor saw the sign of any ' boil.'
 ' Suppose,' said Duncan cannily, ' for haaf an 'oor or so,
 We gie the pool a rest, and try the water doon below?'
 Away they started, but in vain the gaudy bait was sped :
 Sir Ferdinand began to wish he'd never left his bed ;
 For whilst the silver salmon were as sulky as could be
 The merry midge was working him exasperatingly.



And worked his wicked will upon the salmon, deer, and grouse.

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And so, in desperation, to the Castle Pool once more
He hurried quickly back, and fished it over as before,
And offered all the likely flies that were within his book,
But not at any one of them would any salmon look.
And when at last, the heavy rod his arm began to tire,
He gave it up to Duncan and he sat him down in ire.
'It isn't any use,' he cried, as Duncan gave a throw,
'If there are any fish at all, they're sulking down below.'
'They're vara bad,' said Duncan, 'but I'd like to try a cast,
Below the stane, for there I saw the muckle saumon last.'
He'd hardly finished speaking, when he felt a thrilling shock,
For the 'feathery imposter,' when it swept below the rock,
Was taken by a monster, as he instantly could feel,
And Sir Ferdinand was startled by the shrieking of the reel.
The rod was bending double, and the line was running out,
And the baronet—ere Cameron knew what he was about—
Had dashed into the water, and had taken from his hand
The rod that held the salmon he so coveted to land.
Then Duncan was the witness of the most determined strife;
The noble salmon struggled hard, and battled for his life.
Fresh from the sea, and silvery, and vigorous, and strong,
He started down the pool; and took his enemy along.
And then he wildly threw himself three times into the air,
But still the point was eased a bit, and still the fly was there.
He rushed toward Sir Ferdinand, right to his very feet—
'Twas all the fisherman could do, his purpose to defeat;
But, as the line continued taut, the fish with all his might
Made for the rapids down below, and forced his foe to fight
By 'give and take' no longer, but by putting on a strain
That tested all the strength of rod and casting-line again.
And slowly, and by inches, then, the gallant fish was brought
Up to the deeper water, from the safety that he sought.
And then he showed upon the top, and then he gently sank,
And Duncan, who was dancing with excitement on the bank,
Prepared the gaff, and shouted to Sir Ferdinand, 'Tak' care!
He's thirty pounnds whateffer, if ye land him, I declare!'
And soon the struggle ended, and the victory was won,
The noble fish upon the bank lay shining in the sun,
Whilst, in a silence broken by the ripple of the tide,
Sir Ferdinand and Cameron stood one on either side.
The former looked at Duncan, then, but not a word he said,
And, when the latter met the look, he turned away his head.
One thought was common to them both, as each was well aware,
'The man that hooked him claims the fish that lies between us there.'
The baronet in silence took his pocket-book in hand,
He sorted out two one-pound notes, and he replaced the band.

And then at last he spoke, and, 'Duncan Cameron,' he said,
'Take these and keep a quiet tongue for ever in your head ;
For understand me clearly, if you fail to keep it in,
I will not leave a single bone unbroken in your skin !'
Then Cameron protested much, and breathed a pious wish
That he might die before he told the story of the fish ;
To which, as with a steadfast gaze he looked him through and through,
Sir Ferdinand replied, 'It would be better far for you !'
Then shortly afterwards, as all the guests were gathered round
The breakfast table at the lodge, they saw upon the ground,
That from the windows sloped away, a mighty salmon lie,
Which Duncan and Sir Ferdinand were standing proudly by.
Profuse congratulations poured from all the ladies then,
And cooler ones which hardly hid the envy of the men.
But nothing said Sir Ferdinand regarding his success,
Except 'The weight is thirty pounds, and rather more than less.'
And then he turned and hurried off for breakfast to prepare,
Rejoicing in the appetite obtained in Highland air.
But, on returning freshly clad, to join his friends, he found
Congratulations ended, and a whisper going round.
And presently a lady spoke, so merry was her eye :
'We hear that Duncan Cameron can throw a killing fly !'
Immediately a shout of laughter rose from all the rest,
And soon Sir Ferdinand himself was laughing with the best.
'That wretched Cameron,' he cried, 'will end by being hung.
I warned him that I'd have his life, unless he held his tongue !'
His host remarked, 'You hardly know the Highlander, I fear ;
He only gets excited by a salmon or a deer :
For hooking such a bonnie fish, he never could refrain,
At risk of life, from taking all the credit he could gain.'
'So !' gaily laughed Sir Ferdinand, 'I must forgive him, then ;
He evidently does not stand in awe of me.' But when
He next required Duncan's aid, no Duncan could be found,
Though people went in search of him through all the country round.
And never in the neighbourhood did any human eye
The form of Duncan Cameron for many weeks descry.
Not till the leaves had fallen, and the heavy clouds were black,
And snow was on the mountain tops, did Duncan venture back.
And ever, when they told him what a fool he was to run,
And how the merry baronet had meant it all in fun,
He solemnly would answer, with a shaking of the head,
'I'm sairtain that Sir Fer—r—dinand wass meanin' what he said !'

ALLIGATOR HUNTING.

By 'CHAMELEON.'

LLIGATOR hunting as a profession has almost died out in Florida. The farms where 'gators are reared, cared for, and when matured, killed, with the tanning pits and house close at hand, have pushed the one-time famous Alligator Cracker to the wall, and he is gradually becoming extinct as the Dodo from mere drifting into other lines of sport.

Alligators still exist, of course, in the lagoons and rivers, but they no longer pay the hunter for his work and expenditure, and are now the 'meat' for the tenderfoot and traveller. These are in turn the 'meat' for the old-time Cracker, who takes in and does for a number of the parties which fashion and sport now send yearly in the winter from New York and other large cities to Florida.

Very recently I and several friends went, at the invitation of one of the party who had a comfortable house-boat on Lake Harney, to spend a couple of weeks with him, shooting, fishing, &c., before he started on his annual trip through the lagoons to the coast, to which point he has spent three years already trying to find a way.

One day we had met with little success, and coming back, one of the party grumbled, saying he had not seen even an alligator within rifle shot, and proposed that, to while away the time until dinner, we put up a target, and shot at a mark for a pool. While we were talking a man came up behind us, and said, 'If yer want a shot at a 'gator, boss, yer kin hev it fer a price. How much will yer riz fer it?'

We all turned with a smile, and saw a genuine Cracker, one of the kind that prefers alligator to game, and knows every water-course, mound, and bluff from Lake Harney to Lake Washington. Our host took him in at a glance, struck a bargain with him—so much money, and a square meal (principally to get some yarns out of him)—and away we went to where his little 'A' tent was pitched in a clump of stunted cabbage palms. It was mildewed and old, and at the back was hauled up his light batteau of cypress, ready for business; and pointing down

the water, he said, 'There's yer place, boss ; git behind they clumps of brush an' I'll bring the 'gators in shot on the pi-ninserler' (this being a tongue of mud, jutting out into the water). We got into position, and before we could say a word or attempt to stop him, he came out of his tent, naked, and plunged into the river, splashing, yelling, and laughing for dear life. For a minute or so the lagoon was tenantless except for him ; and then way down I saw one, two, black-looking logs slowly forging up against the weak current, and I knew they were alligators. Another came crawling down the side opposite to us, seemingly emerging from the mud ; and although our decoy evidently saw them, he appeared to take no notice, but continued his antics just the same. At last, when every one was getting very nervous, he turned to the shore and swam swifter than any man I ever saw. After him came a big alligator, nine feet long, cleaving the water like a tug, apparently gaining on him every stroke, and I would have sent a ball at him but for our self-possessed decoy shouting, 'Don't shoot until I land.' Almost as soon as the words were out of his mouth he rolled up on the pi-ninserler, and lay about twenty feet from the water. Three alligators, thinking they had him, climbed out, and were met with such a fusilade as astonished them ; two rolled over, thrashing around, but dead to all intents and purposes ; and the other, plunging back, tried to stand on his head in the water, and then with a mad plunge went off to seek the deepest water within half a mile, where he would die and then float.

Our friend the Cracker arose, walked down to the two bodies of his late pursuers, inspected them, found one with two bullets in the eye-socket, and the other with one bullet in the eye and two 'Centers,' wagged his head wisely, and said, 'Mighty tony shooting. If you'll just wait a minute or two I'll cut the jaws off for you, and take a steak or two for myself, before I come with you.' With that he commenced cutting them up, but the odour of musk was too much for us, and lighting our cigars, he was directed to follow along. He was doing his work naked, so as not to bring the awful musk odour with him, when he rejoined us. Such is native etiquette !

That night we sat after dinner round a camp fire built every night in a contrivance for that purpose on the bow of the boat, and passing the fifteen-year-old Bourbon along, allowed it to work its will on the tongue of our guest.

A faint glow to the west attracted our attention, and also

proved the lever to set his jaw tackle in motion, for he looked meditatively across to the southern horizon and said: 'Hit's a mighty good year fer prairie fires. That spell of frost three weeks back killed the prairie grass, and now its standing ten and twelve feet high, and as dry as tinder. The wust fire I ever fell in with was in Little Mud Creek last Febury four year.'

Of course he was asked to explain, and the bottle was passed, and he resumed in the peculiar manner of the 'Cracker,' who, knowing nothing of hyperbole or profanity as a matter of emphasis, reels off the most stirring recitals slowly and without the least show of animation, in a droning speech and an utter disregard of all effects to which every ordinary reciter or storyteller directs his main attention.

'I was agoin up to Little Mud Lake after 'gators, and got into one of the side courses, an hour—or may be an hour'n a half—afore sundown, when I seen a pretty consid'able smoke a-pilin' up to the su'th'ud. The wind was in the north, and its hard work for a fire to eat its way to windward. So I pulled my boat into a little lagoon just big enough to turn her round in, and took a bit ov somethin' to eat, rolled myself in my blanket for a sleep, and determined to wait until dawn before I started in. I doan't know how long I'd been asleep, but I was awaked by a roaring noise some time in the night; and, putting my head out ov ther blankets, I found the wind had changed, and gone round from the north to the su'th'ud, and was blowing a pretty stiff gale. It didn't take me long to see that the sky was all lit up with a red glare. I could hear the crackle ov flames pretty consid'able close, an' says I to myself, "I recon that fire's a-coming this way, an' I'd better see about it."

'Now I do hate turning out in the middle ov the night, losing my buty sleep, an' I can't afford that, yer know; if it's git up I'll git up, but to crawl out, chore around, an' crawl back—I ain't takin' much ov it in minc. I've seen a good many prairie fires, but when I stood up in my boat I'm fair to own I was surprized, sorter! It seemed as if the hull shootin' match (everything W. P.) were a burnin' up, an' the flames were a-sweeping north'ud faster than a mule could canter going home. I looked back to the open water, and found I'd pulled out a deal further than I'd 'llowed to myself afore I went ter sleep, and I saw that, in the strange and strong glare that lit up the waterways, 'twasn't much use trying to pull back inter the main creek so as to get a-head of the rushing flames. The little lagoon I had run into was

what a French gentleman I took around once called a 'cullersack,' shaped like a bag or a pocket he meant, with only the opening yer got in by. I never knew why it was specially a 'cullersack,' but maybe in the section where he was raised an' grown the bags are differunt, but 'cullersacks' are mighty scarce here. Anyway, as I was er saying, it was a sorter pond, an' the tall dry grass stood around it ten feet high, except where I had come in, and the roots of the grass was a-growing in water just deep enough to cover' em, although it were a dry time. In wet weather, or just after a heavy rain, yer could row a boat right along over the tops ov the grass, aye, or run a steamboat if necessary. I've seen that creek rise twenty foot in ten hours, I have, an' then not half hump itself!

'Well! seein' as how somethin' had to be done right off, I shoved the boat right into the middle of the pond, stuck down an oar hard an' fast, an' tied up to it close as I could, nose to oar; an' before I'd got her made good an' fast, the fire had come so close, that the sparks and cinders was well nigh a-blinding me, an' the wind whirlin' upwards with the flames in a way to make a man's hair stan' right up on his head almost. It seemed as if the hull world was a-going up in flames, and it looked like takin' me erlong, like a sort of 'Lijah I hear the niggers yell about at camp meeting. Lands! you never seen such a wild sight, an' in front ov the roarin', rushin' flames, a-sailin' around in the blood-red sky was herrin's, marsh hens, blackbirds, cranes, ducks, geese, an' such, all a-squawin' an' a-taking on; and streaking it through the tops ov the grass was teal, little ducks, an' coots. But 'twasn't no place for me to be standin' an' lookin' on; it was a gran' sight sure; but there was no free seat about it, it was pay yer check, an' hog the show as much as yer liked afterwards; but the free list was limited to the 'gators an' fish, you bet yer life! So I soused my blanket in the water, got down in the bottom ov the boat, an' covered myself with that wet blanket, an', friends, my teeth chattered like thunder. Perhaps it were the fire, perhaps it weren't, an' perhaps it was as I only jest larned the kind ov travellin' companions I was goin' to have, for just before I covered my head I saw a derved big painter going past, licketty spit, with the flames a-jest catchin' on to its tail.

'My teeth didn't chatter long. I hadn't been under the blanket a minute, afore the red shows through, and the hot air came over me, an' I felt like Cy Bovens did, I guess, when he

got chills in camp, and the boys shook wood ashes down his neck, and then poured water—they figgerd on a sweat bath, but forgot the lye in the ash, an' derved near skinned Cy. Cured chills though, be gosh! While I was thinkin' this was the worst fire I'd ever fell in with in these parts, I h'ard a sudden swishing and swashing, an' crashing, louder even than the roar of the flames, and the shaller water in the pond began to splash, an' the boat ter rock. Great land ov love, I thought, is this a under the arth trouble, are we goin' to have it both ways to oncet. Then a tunk came against the boat that nearly turned her over. "What's this?" says I to myself. Then she was hit on the other side an' sent spinnin', and the crashin' an' tearin' in the grasses, an' the swashin' an' bilin' in the water was all the time growing louder an' louder, an' by this time my boat was a-bobbin' about pretty lively, now histed clean outter the water, an' now most sunk by something floppin' on the gunnel, until I could stand it no longer, an' I says to myself, says I, "If this be the end of the world, I guess I'm entitled to take a hand in it, seein' as I'm here." An' with that, I riz my head up an' peeped out.

"'Gators, by snucky!" I says; but I couldn't hold my eyes open but a second, but I saw there in the edge of the flame, tearin' along under the leaping tongues of fire was a mighty drove of them, big an' little, all chinked in with little water moccasin snakes; an' there was hundreds more plumpin' into that little pond, and bilin' with them already there. I heard ov the dangers ov storming a battery, but, frends, right there in that little ornery sixteen by twenty yard pond there was more sudden death to the square inch than any place you ever heard or dreamed of. I saw enough, an' got my head under right away, but I could tell what was going on by the sound under an' around the boat; an', mind yer, all of this took place a derved sight quicker than I'm tellin' it to yer! Just then came a blast of heat that I could tell singed the fuzz on my blanket, and set the contints ov that pool a-squirmin' wuss than ever, until I thought the boat would all go to splinters; an' then the heat began to moderate some, but the smoke came down thick enough to choke a body. If any ov you is bettin' men, yer kin bet yer boots I wanted that skiff to hold together.

'After a while the smoke cleared away a bit, an' after one or two trials I crawled out from under that blanket! Will I ever forget the sight! Whether yer believe me or not, it is ov little

conserkence to me, but I want to tell yer that the pond was plumb full ov 'gators, water moccasins, an' other varmin, an' was litterally overflowin' with 'em. And oh! the ornery cusses they looked. The heat an' hot water had scorched an' scalded them, an' there was their greyed mugs, an' bleary eyes, like so many old, old men transformed, a-looking up at me. They was wedged so tightly around the boat that she was histed half way out ov the water, an I couldn't hev got away any more than if she'd been ketched in a jamb of sawings.

"Yere's a pretty kettle ov fish," says I; "an' how am I to get out of it?" for with those allergators a-fomentin' an' chawing at each other, an' moccasins strikin' right an' left with death on every strike, and the boat a-most high and dry in the middle of them for want of water, it wasn't my picknick, sure! I was afraid to move for fear she would tip over, an' I didn't care about takin' my ticket for glory over that route. I sat there kinder disconsolate, watchin' the smoke and flames fightin' in the rear of the fire that had passed over an' was now hull down, when I saw a big 'gator shake himself loose from the crowd, an' begin to climb over them in the direction I came in. Them beasts has cunning, he knew the ground was too hot. Pretty soon others followed him, and the boat began to settle a bit, an' in less than half an hour I was alone in my boat in the middle ov the blackened swamp.'

One of our party looked around and said, 'You missed your harvest! You could have killed any number of alligators, and landed them when the pool cleared.'

The Cracker looked at him rather pitifully, and said, 'Stranger, can't you imagine that I had something else to think about just then? When I came out of that muss I felt I didn't care shucks if I never see or set teeth in allergator agin! You city fellers is powerful hot on sport when you do get at it, meaning no offence, boss!'

That night I had a delirium tremens dream, and do not want to hear any more snake stories at present.

Our Cracker acquaintance left us that night, and next morning his tent was struck—the money he had received from us side tracked him to the nearest point of civilization.

HOW WILD HORSES ARE CAUGHT.

By WILF POCKLINGTON.

IN the lower part of Texas is a country consisting of a vast rolling prairie, almost limitless in extent, on which are large herds of horses having no owners, breeding in a semi-wild state, and from which stock the nucleus of the horse farms are drawn. These herds are supposed to have been formed by the horses of settlers, travellers, or emigrants, who, having been slaughtered by the Indians, had had their effects confiscated or burned, and their horses, having broken loose in the tumult, fled to the plains, and herding together in sympathy, growing unaccustomed to the presence of man, had returned to their primitive condition.

As the demand for horses arose in the settled quarters of the country, men began to make trips into the prairie lands for the purpose of catching the wild ones; and, partially taming them, would drive them in droves to the nearest point of transit to the centres of civilisation, and also to the horse ranches in various parts of the West. So in time the catching of the wild horse became a regular trade; territories were divided out by local authorities and became recognised boundaries, and huge corrals and buildings were erected with a view to enlarging and cultivating the highly lucrative trade.

Some time ago I had an opportunity of inspecting the country, the wild herds, and the method of catching them, and if the life was wild, hard, and rough, I can look back now and honestly say that seldom has life compressed as much solid pleasure into the square inch of existence as did mine in those days.

In the capture of the wild horse, three men usually work together, and by constant association become like one person rather than three, every act, every thought in the method employed being in unison, and seeming to emanate from a single brain. These three men would have five well-trained horses, fleet, hardy, and by careful usage and constant exercise always kept in the very pink of condition.

When a herd was located, if it were too far from the corral of the ranch, as was often the case, the country was surveyed until some ravine, or gulch that would serve was found, and then

the bearings of the spot were carefully noted so as to render it easy to find again. This ravine was speedily turned into a corral by means of vast quantities of rope passed from boulder to boulder, or stump to stump, and being finished, one of the men stationed himself upon the most slightly eminence near at hand ; and in another direction, likely to prove the most natural runaway, was placed another man with one of the fleetest horses of the five.

The work of the most skilful man of the remaining three now begins, and it is said to take years to mature the experience and judgment to the point required for the successful operation of the drive. Mounted upon the fleetest horse of the lot, supplied with a water bag, a supply of food, and a pair of excellent field glasses, he rides away in the early dawn, going at an easy loping gait that these prairie-bred horses will keep up hour after hour, with no sensible fatigue or diminution of speed. Ever and anon his keen eyes sweep the surrounding country through the glasses ; it may be ten, it may be twenty miles, before he detects a herd of horses quietly grazing on the rolling grassy expanse. Then in a second his glance takes in the nature of the country, and without a pause, knowing that if they have seen him a pause would be fatal and stampede them, he takes advantage of every bush, every mound that he can bring into the line of vision, and as he approaches closer, lying flat on his horse's neck, until it appears like a riderless steed, and then when within a few hundred yards he sits erect, dashes into full view, and the sport commences.

For a brief instant the herd, gathered round their leader, stands in motionless amaze ; then the old stallion throws up his head with a terrified snort, moves restlessly to and fro, his mane and tail streaming upon the fresh morning breeze, and finally turning, first trots, and then, hearing the approaching beat of hoofs, breaks into a run, and so commences a race which none but those rich in speed and endurance can hope to live to the end. The trained horse, ridden by the man, knows his work, and does it with the intelligence of a human being. With head well down, and swinging out on a long easy lope that covers the ground in a surprising manner, he follows the flying herd. He has been there before and knows what is before him, so does not distress himself unnecessarily, only showing his excitement in the involuntary quiver of the neck muscles, and the impatient but self-controlled toss of the head, and occasional champ of the





bit. As the animals become convinced that they are pursued by this strange creature they grow more and more alarmed, and the first wild burst of speed carries them far in advance, but never out of sight, of their pursuer, who by dexterous engineering is enabled to cut corners as the herd zig-zags to obtain a look behind, and so does not have to travel as far as they do to cover the same distance.

The great secret is to keep the herd on the move, and harass them to vary their rate of speed as much as possible. Not a halt must they have for a bite of grass, or a sup of water, but must be kept moving in the fairly straight line of flight they have taken upon themselves. Mile after mile is covered and the horse and rider keep on at a steady gait that is relentless as the gallop of a Russian wolf, and seemingly as free from fatigue. The sun rises higher and higher, and grows hot and scorching in the cloudless heavens; the trained horse has scarcely turned a hair, but runs like an automaton, while the wild horses are fretted into a lather, and show signs of work. Never before have they been speeded like this; there is not a thought for a grateful graze, or a drink from a chance stream, all their attention is centred upon the unknown thing that follows them. If the herd skirt round a base of a low ridge, the horseman cuts the sequence, disappearing for a few minutes, and emerging nearer than ever, always in sight when least expected, and ever coming, coming. The fright of the wild horses has now developed into veritable terror, and clots of foam fly from their mouths and drop on the green herbage, while the hunter smiles with satisfaction as he notes it, and the animals, half crazed by this merciless, continuous pursuit, feel their hearts breaking within them, more from terror than exhaustion. Wherever the rider gets a chance he eases his horse, he leaps from its back to aid it in climbing a ridge, he gives it a mouthful of succulent grass cut with a stroke of his bowie knife, or rinses its mouth out from his water bag, or a chance stream; he knows what the herd will do before long, and is waiting patiently for developments.

Hard ridden though he is, this prairie pony, tough and experienced, is miles fresher than the unriden steeds, and what is more, is full of pluck to overflowing. The terror-stricken animals now show signs of trouble, their stomachs are empty, having been started before they completed their morning meal, their wind is 'blown,' and their tongues are dry. Fear makes

them half unconscious of these troubles, but the inevitable result is the same. They have by this time run fifty, perhaps sixty, miles without a halt, and the old patriarch speeds in an eccentric manner, now this way, now that, while the pursuer keeps on a straight course, watching intently the movements of the leader, who is evidently not as sure of his course as he was at starting. He wheels, turns, and then goes ahead in a vacillating manner, while stride by stride the wiry pony of the plains creeps nearer and nearer. The rider looks for a convenient ridge or hollow in the prairie, he finds it, and is at once lost to sight. In a second he has sponged out his gallant horse's mouth and eyes, and is in the saddle again, but with his horse's head turned homeward. He listens intently, and smiles; beat, beat, beat, go the hoofs of the herd, for the old leader, in his fright and wonder, missing his pursuer, thinks he is to be found behind him, and as he turns, starts off on the apparently clear course, and with dilated nostrils and labouring breath is galloping back over the same track he has come, followed by his faithful mares. Now the race is to the bitter end, there is no escape now, and the herd is as good as caught.

The game, swift horse knows what is expected of him, and that his energies have been saved for this time, he whines once or twice with excitement, and as he feels the spur, very gently, for the first time in the run, it fires his blood to racing heat, and he stretches out at an increased rate of speed. The failure of what the herd, in their brute instinct, had thought was a successful ruse to throw their pursuer off the track, gave them new terror, which for the moment lent them desperate strength, but the reaction consequent upon their short period of self-congratulation, followed, and nearly worn out, fretted, starved, and parched with thirst, they run for their lives. It is a terrific chase, and a wonderful sight, to which words fail to do justice. It is a vivid picture of the triumph of human intelligence over brute instinct.

Mile succeeds mile, and every step brings them nearer to the starting-place of that morning; they do not recognise this, and under the hot mid-day sun they still run swiftly but despairingly, their only idea being to escape from this terrible pursuer or die. The plains pony appears to know that the faster he runs, the sooner his work will be over, and he strains every nerve, forcing the herd to the very limit of possible exertion to keep in front of him. The rider appears to be made of wire, every movement

that science suggests to save his horse is made, and the grim determined look upon his dirty face, and saddle-soiled garb, show that he has not escaped scatheless from the fatigue that would have killed a novice.

Far off on the horizon line stands the man left on the eminence, anxiously sweeping the open country with his field-glass. He has watched for one hour, or perhaps four, and his horse stands beside him, idly nibbling a blade of grass, or rubbing its head against his shoulder ; near by is another horse. Suddenly his range of vision is centred upon a speck on the prairie, far, far off. It may be only a bunch of antelope, or a band of wild horses running at play ! He gazes long and earnestly, and soon sees that gambolling horses do not run like these. A careful adjustment of the lenses shows him a solitary figure in the rear, and in another minute he sees that horse has a rider. The glasses are shut and put away, he is in the saddle at a bound, and with a call to the saddleless horse, he is away at full speed to meet the approaching cavalcade. The ground flies under his horse's feet, and soon he sees, a mile or two away, the fleeing herd and the solitary rider. A signal tells him he is seen, and taking advantage of the topographical conditions of the ground he skulks behind ridges, and through hollows to cross the course of the approaching animals. This requires rare judgment to do successfully, as he must gauge the speed of the running herd, and place himself in position without detracting their attention from the form pursuing them. The trick is cleverly done, however, and while the wary but undaunted stallion and his mares sweep round some elevation, the tired, plucky pony, and the two fresh horses meet. As quickly as saddles can be transferred, the gallant horse that has made a continuous run of from sixty to ninety miles is free to roll and kick on the grass, while the iron-sinewed man who rode him vaults with a laugh and a jest on to the back of the fresh horse and is again in hot pursuit. It is human brain against horse brain, and the reinforcements will win the day. Now follows the cream of the skilful manœuvring tactics.

The wild horses exhausted, and blown with terror, cannot run much farther ; their boundless vitality is run out to the breaking point ; they are confused, and take to their last resort, showing that intelligence has deserted them, and that the end is near. They commence running in a circle. At first it is about two miles in diameter. The pursuer takes the inside

track, and makes his circle in a little less, still keeping slightly in the rear. Little by little the diameter of the circle is decreased, and even if left alone they would now run themselves to a standstill, but the man on horseback gradually decreases his circle, and the herd, instead of leading, now follow the tactics of their pursuer, and sensibly decrease the area of their circle, as he decreases his. Gradually it grows less and less, and the poor panting creatures stagger around in what they think is their only avenue of escape. Narrower and narrower grows their course, the third man, unnoticed, closes in one side, and the second one on the other, and at last, as the sun sinks low in the west, they cease running from sheer exhaustion and stand aimlessly staggering backwards and forwards, for the time conquered.

They have probably run over one hundred miles. The corral may be some distance away, and to let them take their time would be dangerous, as if they recover their wind, and get a mouthful of grass, their untameable natures would start them off again. But among them appears a strange saddleless horse, who takes the lead and steps out briskly, while they follow, too dazed and bewildered to know it is not their leader. This horse goes straight for the corral, enters its extending arms, and is followed by the herd; the three men in the rear close up, and in a short time the twenty to thirty horses are wild no longer; they may rest, graze, and drink, but they will never know the freedom of the plains again.

Next morning the plains pony left rolling on the grass five miles away will be found at the corral gates, scraping acquaintance with the prisoners, who are restless and ill at ease, although rested and fed, and suffering from nothing more than stiffness. They are fretful and nervous, and are kept corraled for some days, with the trained horses for companions. By-and-by they will cease to start at the sight of a human being, and will only shyly watch the men who enter the enclosure and move among them, keeping an eye on their hoofs. Then, when considered quiet and acclimatised, they will be drafted to their destination, and from a life of perfect freedom they go to a life of servitude; some are treated well, some badly, some take to the new life kindly, some break their hearts and die, but they for the most part never see the broad swelling plains again, or feel the rush of the free morning wind in their faces. It is a hard fate, but a necessity.



The herd exhausted.

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'THE WHITE BLACKCOCK.'

By 'ROCKWOOD.'

WHAT'S making me white, sir? Bless ye, sir, if ye had but seen it yersel, sir, wi' your ain een, ye wadna be verra red in the cheeks. Something's gaun to happen here, sir, and that ere lang. Deid a watna but what we should send for the meenister,' said Duncan, our head keeper, one morning at the Lodge gate.

'What in all the world have you seen? a water kelpie, or a ghost, or what?'

'A ghaist, ay, maist likely, a ghaist; but wha's ghaist? Oh! the deil take me, that ever I should have left my bonnie Strathfillan to come to this deil's glen.'

'And what's wrong with it, Duncan?'

'Wrang with it, sir! it's jist haunted, sir, wi' speerits, jist full o' them is the whole place, bogles and witches and the like; but here I'll no stay, not one week after what I saw and heard last nicht. Eh, sirs! but it was dreidful.'

'What! another water kelpie? this comes of your putting raisins in your haggis, instead of sticking to simple oatmeal, like your forefathers;' said Dr. Dashale, the author of 'Delusions and their Cause,' and who had been spending his holidays with us in the wilds of Wester Ross. 'What was it ye saw this time, eh?'

'Weel, sir, I was coming hame in the gloaming, after being ower at Dugald Ross's Inn, and jist as I came to the edge o' the Burnamwood, where there's aye a covey o' black game and some auld blackcocks sitting, I see's something white. Says I to ma'sel, can this be a Ptermigan or a White hare up a tree, or what can it be, in a' the world. So I creeps up on ma haunds and knees, and eh, sirs! what dy'e think it was, but a great big white blackcock?'

'The Lord save us!' roared the doctor, almost bursting with laughter; 'why didn't ye catch it and put it in the black leather carpet bag? Ha! ha! I wonder if we couldn't catch a blue red grouse to stuff along with it; but go on, it's wonderful, the effect of Dugald Ross's whiskey on the top of a dinner of haggis; what happened next?'

'Weel' said Duncan, not in the least abashed, and still

retaining his nervous, apprehensive look, as if liable to be seized and carried off by the dire one, at any moment. 'I said "Shu!" and up flew an auld blackcock and a grey hen, and went awa out o' the wood as fast as their wings would carry them, but the ghaist—'

'Oh, yes! the ghost,' said the doctor, with a laugh, 'the ghost; yes, go on.'

'It clapped its wings, and commenced to whistle, "Pop goes the Weasel!"'

This was too much for any of us, and far too much for the authority on delusions, who almost broke the back of his chair, lying back to get relief from his fits of laughter.

'My Certes!' he said, 'only fancy, a ghost in the form of a blackcock, whistling "Pop goes the Weasel" from the branch of a tree in Burnamwood. Hamlet's father's ghost is nothing to this, but go on; what happened next? You ran off, I suppose?'

'No, sir; my legs were too weak to run.'

'Oh! I can believe that; that is certainly one effect which evil spirits have on the legs.'

Not seeing what the doctor was hitting at, and feeling rather encouraged by the remark, the frightened keeper went on.

'It finished "Pop goes the Weasel" right through, and then gied its wings a flap, and let out the most fearful volley o' bad words ever I heerd in ma life. A never heerd neething like it since auld Admiral Hay ower at Gulchan Lodge lost his temper once at me for letting a gun off at half cock when I was loading to him. Od, sir! it was jist fearsome to hear. Weel, up I gets to mak' a race for it, and up it gets and mak's a flutter round ma head till I could feel the smell o' the reeking brimstone coming off it, sir, jist like to choke me, and I never stopped till I got hame, but I have never sleepit a single wink the whole nicht, sir. Something's going to happen!'

'You are quite right, Duncan; something will happen, if you don't take care, you'll find yourself in a lunatic asylum soon, if you do not eat less haggis and drink less of Dugald Ross's whiskey.'

'Aweel, sir; maybe, but every word I tell you is true; as to the whuskey, Dugald Ross will tell ye that I hadna mair than twa or three gills, or fower at the maist.'

'And quite enough; but you'll not be the worse for a wee drop this morning. Just go down to the pantry there, and Paterson will give you a dram.'

No class of people are, of course, more superstitious than the Highlanders, and none of them more so than the Highland keepers. The supernatural is always coming up, on the stalk, or on the drive, and a small bag will be explained away by the information that two magpies flew across the sportsman's path in the morning. Anything in the shape of a *rara avis* is always looked upon with suspicion, and the night before the laird was killed at Inkerman, they will tell you that a white winged hoodie crow was seen on the hill-side that very afternoon.' White harts too, are said to be ominous of something, and there are always some "auld wives" in the village to read the riddles from old reminiscences. Slugs too, have been cut out of silver buttons to shoot hares which have made their forms near to farm-houses where the milk has gone sour. In short, the Highland keeper is a great believer in the omnipresence of the devil. Our keeper, Duncan, was no exception to the rule; indeed, he was, to tell the truth about it, very easily impressed.

As the keeper moved off, the doctor started his favourite subject of 'Delusions and Hallucinations.'

'The very thing, gentlemen, which recruits our wearied nerves, is the very thing which sets them half crazy. What are the water kelpies crying in the streams but the winds playing on their high-strung nerves; what their second sight but a nervous apparition thinner than air, which is never heard of unless somebody dies, when of course, every feature of the deceased, and every feature of the wraith are identified. Bah! it is all nonsense. I must say, however, that this white blackcock story is something quite original, for the Highlands even. But it's all whiskey and haggis; and possibly a moonbeam which played through between the trees when the fellow woke up from his drunken sleep, and the blackcocks and the grey hens flew off.'

'But then he smelt the brimstone, doctor?'

'Smelt the devil!' was the contemptuous remark. 'I mean, deuce knows, I mean that the devil a smell of brimstone he felt at all,' he added, on observing his mistake.

'But supposing there was a white blackcock, and he saw it, what then?'

'What then? if you believe that there is such a thing, let us find it, we can very soon beat Burnamwood.'

'But lead will have no effect on it!'

'Well then; seeing you are as superstitious as the keeper,

let us clip a sovereign's worth of silver into slugs, seeing that the silver currency is the only one believed in by witches, and load some cartridges. Three drachms of powder behind them will make him dance "Pop goes the Weasel."

In a few minutes we fished out some light, big, and ugly half-crowns, and an old chisel, and then began work as 'smashers.' Very soon we had as much as we wanted, and getting hold of four empty shells, we filled, wadded, and turned in the rims of four cartridges. These we placed carefully in our vest pockets for 'ghaists,' and with our cartridge bags filled with a stock of number fours, we set out for Burnamwood, Duncan showing the way, though still evidently very much scared.

'It's no muckle chance ye'll have o' seein' him in the daylight, I tell ye, it's only for an hour between twelve and one o'clock that they let them oot.'

'Ay, ay;' said the still sceptical doctor, 'that's because it's at eleven o'clock they put you out of the public houses. Come on, man, and show us the way; you have the reputation of being the most daring man in a fight with poachers in the whole of Wester Ross, ye have thrashed gangers innumerable when you were a smuggler, I've heard, and yet a cheepin bunch of feathers puts you almost out of your wits.'

'Ay, ay, doctor; there's naething human thet'll tak life, I'm feered for, *no e'en a doctor*, but deil run away wi' me if I'll fight wi' evil speerits.'

'Well, well,' said the doctor; 'lead the way, and we'll see; we have invested ten shillings each in silver slugs, in order to make certain, and if he does get up, devil or no devil, he comes down, and you'll hang him amongst the vermin at the back of your lodge.'

'Will I? I'd as soon think o' eatin' him; but here we are, sir, we may as well be takin' a shot as we go along, and there's some rabbits in the whins here.'

The Scotch terriers, who, as usual, were very eager for the sport, quickly dislodged three or four hares from their seats, and the doctor showed himself as deadly with his gun as his lancet, by taking very smartly a right and left. A pheasant and an old blackcock were our rewards further on, but still no white one. Where could he have flown? Only one place, in Duncan's opinion, and that place does not look well when mentioned in print. At last we reached the exact point in the roadway from which he first detected 'the ghaist,' and led us

to the 'identical, verra tree on which it sat.' There could not be the slightest doubt as to the tree, a larch pine, together with those adjoining, having been used as roosting-places, and the doctor, stepping forward, picked up a white feather.

'Oh, ho! so here is part of the ungodly one's plumage,' said he to Duncan, who did not seem to feel very comfortable, 'but for the life of me,' he said, 'putting it to his nose, can I detect the slightest odour of sulphur. Bah! I believe it is but a feather, after all, from the corner of an old blackcock's wing.'

'Maybe,' said the still trembling keeper; 'but he was as white as a newly washed sheep; he whistled as plainly as a piper, and he swore like a trooper, 'deed, I'm thinkin' yet it maun be the auld Admiral's ghaist come bock to frighten us oot o' our lives.'

'Well, well; then if that be the case, let us try and beat him up, if he's in the neighbourhood, a white blackcock will be easily seen.'

'Faur eesier seen than shot, maybe,' was the reply.

Of all birds, the blackcock is the most inconstant. He will fight in early summer, when his plumage is gay, for his dames, the grey hens, but desert them as soon as they commence to sit on their eggs, and go away to the mountain side, or seek the solitude of some overlooking larch tree in the woodlands, where, as sportsmen will generally find out, he is exceedingly difficult to approach.

If e'er that I a bird might be,
Oh then a blackcock's life for me,
To fight upon the mountain side,
And each grey hen claim for a bride.
To her a husband, loving, true,
Just till the honeymoon is through,
Then to my batchelor life again,
And leave alone my old grey hen.

When family cares begin to grow,
And young blackcocks begin to crow,
I'll leave them early, come home late,
Their mother can them educate.
Till honeymoons begin to shine,
A batchelor's life it will be mine,
Some other wife I'll get again,
And leave once more my old grey hen.

Rattling the trees with their sticks, the keeper and under-keeper held on through the woods, now and then putting up a

brown hare, now and then a rabbit, and making up a pretty fair bag, though we were not very anxious for sport. We had held on in a broad easy beat for half-a-mile, when suddenly resounded the cry from the under-keeper, of—

'Mark the ghaist! the ghaist on the left.'

Sure enough, but far out of reach, away with a heavy flight, went a huge bird, the very sight of which sent the blood from old Duncan's face, and he began to say audibly the Lord's Prayer. Putting one of our silver-slug cartridges in the left barrel, and a lead one in the right, laughing at our own superstitions the while, the doctor and I held a council of war.

'How are we to get him?' said the latter, 'the keepers are of no use.'

'Not a bit,' was my reply; 'they are of opinion that it is old Admiral Hay's ghost, come back to frighten poachers, for he always vowed that that was a job he would like, if he was allowed to return to earth, he was such a notorious game preserver.'

'Well! it's scarcely fair to give him a broadside, if that's his earthly mission, but we'll try and get near him, and satisfy ourselves as to the full truth of Duncan's midnight adventure. If he keeps a civil beak, we'll maybe let him alone; if he uses a word of bad language, then, ghost or no ghost, down he comes.'

'Well, then, let's try to stalk him, he's flown in the clumpse of Scotch firs yonder. So you try the right side, and I'll try the left, and we'll get as close as we can. The keepers can stay where they are, they're of no use, evidently.'

So on the doctor and I walked well into the clumpse, keeping our eyes amongst the branches. An old cock was allowed to fly away unscathed, also a grey hen; and one or two brown hares owed their lives to the fact that we were after 'ghaists.' We had examined nearly the whole copse, and were about to put our hammers down, and interchange opinions, when we were both startled by the scream of a boatswain's whistle, so natural, that the doctor, who had been in the navy, could have sworn he was on board ship again. It was followed by the call of "*Heave away, ye lubbers, or I'll mast-head you. I'll keel-haul every one of you; I will, by God;*" followed by a long string of fearful oaths.

'The Admiral's ghost it is, by Heaven!' he said, looking almost as white as the keeper did in the morning; 'where is it?'

'Up there in the tree,' I answered, as I pointed to a large Scotch fir.

Yes; there, safely nestled in the branches, and almost hidden from view, was the strange bird which had frightened Duncan out of his wits. As we stood watching, it began to whistle 'Pop goes the Weasel,' and went over every beat and bar, as the old keeper said, correctly; and then relapsed into bad language again.

'Did ever one hear the like of that from a bird?' said the doctor. 'By heavens, he'll demoralise every blackcock in the country-side if he's allowed to live another day. Hang it! if he's not the most accomplished swearer I've heard since I left the service. I'd like just to wing him, and have ten minutes conversation with him alive.'

'Then use the slugs, doctor, and let him get on the wing; I'll wake him.' So saying, I dumped my gun-stock against the tree, when, looking down, the Admiral gave orders to 'Let go all,' and flew off. Six feet from his perch, a slug overtook him, and broke his wing, and down he came to the ground, swearing hard all the time.

'A big white Cockatoo, by the powers! How did it come here?'

Ere I had time to give him an answer, Duncan had joined us, and, instead of manifesting fear, as we expected, burst into a fit of laughter.

'Weel,' he says, 'it jist serves me weel! About the last thing, ower the last glass, I remember now, and I forgot a' about it, was Malcolm MacKenzie, keeper to Lady Hay, telling me to keep a look-out for the Admiral's auld parrot, as it had escaped, and was ower about my woods. Eh, dear me! but he's no sair hurt, I hope?'

'Hurt, no!' said the doctor, who had to lean himself against a tree from laughing; 'I'll have his wing right in a week.'

All the way home the wounded 'ghaist' threatened us with the cat and the mast-head, and called us by all the vile names in a swearer's vocabulary. In a fortnight his wing, which was broken, was mended, and it was not without reluctance that we returned to his rightful owner 'The White Blackcock.'

COMMODORE CLARK, R.C.Y.C.

By 'AN OLD CORINTHIAN.'



AND whatever you do, be sure and keep your eye on Paisley,' was the advice of the late Earl of Beaconsfield to a political friend, who was going into Scotland electioneering. The origin of the phrase is not well known ; but more than likely it was an observation of Christopher North, who was himself a native of the quaint old Scottish town, and, while editing *Blackwood's Magazine*, was very fond of poking fun, in his own quaint way, at the people of the west.

In regard to the subject matter of this article, it is noteworthy that during the past twenty years yachtsmen have had to keep their eye on it, for many of the finest boats that ever carried racing flags in British waters have been owned by the public-spirited men of the cotton-thread capital—the Coats and Clarks, whose names are household words all the world over. Amongst these there were none who did so much for the sport as the late Mr. John Clark, of Gateside, Largs, who died somewhat suddenly in the second week of April last year, as his magnificent screw steamer, *Mohican*—one of the fastest and finest in the world—had been ordered into commission for the coming season. The deceased was Commodore of the Royal Clyde and Royal Largs Yacht Clubs ; of the latter he was the practical founder. With his name, yacht-designing, as contrasted with the old rule-of-thumb building, must always be associated ; also that great advance in the architecture of the pastime which, beginning with *Vanduaara*, in 1880, culminated in such triumphs as the *Valkyrie* and *Britannia* last year.

A short sketch of his yachting career must be of interest. His brother, Mr. James Clark, the senior member of the well-known Anchor cotton-thread firm, had a summer residence in the old Ayrshire town of Largs, for nearly a century the headquarters of the Royal Northern Yacht Club. He bought Lord Middleton's old sixty-ton cutter, the *Snowflake*, and engaged William Mackie, of the forty-ton cutter, *Alceste*, as captain. Bailie Clark did not care so much for the pastime of yachting as sitting on deck in the salt sea air, and Mackie's first little trouble was over the Bailie bringing on board his favourite garden chair. The little difficulties were eventually smoothed

over. It was, no doubt, a little perplexing for Mackie, when about to go about, to be told by the Bailie, whose weight was very heavy, that he was perfectly happy where he was, the situation being on the lee side; but, as the *Snowflake* did little more in the way of the sport than an occasional luffing match, this did not matter. In one heavy-weather race, Mackie shortened the course by leaving out Holy Island and, running into Brodick Bay with a free sheet, stole the winning gun, and squared off to the Ayrshire coast without waiting for the cup.

Having enjoyed a few days' yacht-sailing with his brother, the deceased gentleman, Mr. John Clark, engaged Mackie to go down to England and buy the *Condor* from the trustees of the late Sir Francis Gooch. The *Condor*, which was built by Steele & Co., of Greenock, in those days had a fair reputation for speed, but, of course, was quite out-classed by such boats as *Cythera*, *Neva*, *Florinda*, and *Jullanar*. In a long, hard beat to windward up Loch Fyne, she won the Royal Northern Yacht Cup in the opening cruise by exactly *one second*, the famous schooner, *Selene*, being next boat. It blew hard that day, and we saw more than one topsail part from the yards. The writer was in the *Snowflake*, with Bailie Clark's son and poor Tom Glen—alas! both are dead now. Mr. John Clark was very proud over the victory of his boat, and well he might have been, for it was possibly one of the grandest cruising races ever sailed. The *Condor* was, however, far from being good enough to race in the regular regatta matches, though a very powerful vessel, and fast in a long, close haul to windward. Mr. Clark, however, had little idea of racing at the time, the boat having been bought for cruising in the Outer Hebrides and the inner waters of the Clyde.

At the commencement of the following season, an event happened which gave him an impetus in another direction, and one which had a great influence on this, one of the healthiest and most genuinely British of British pastimes. For the purpose of having the boat's bottom thoroughly scraped and cleaned without the trouble of docking, Captain Mackie took her down to the Isle of Man, with the view of beaching her. The work was successfully accomplished, and, under jib and foresail, the vessel was dodging about Douglas harbour, waiting for a boat which was expected from the shore. In ordinary circumstances the head sails would have been quite enough to work the vessel with, even on a ragged lee shore. A very heavy tide was running in, however, and before the mainsail could be hoisted, to the sudden astonishment of

skipper and crew, she struck. The breeze and sea increasing, she was soon a complete wreck. It was the morning of the opening cruise of the Royal Northern Yacht Club, and the news caused quite a sensation amongst the owners and crews of the fleet assembled in Rothesay Bay. Mr. Clark's reply to his captain's telegram was to 'save as much of the wreck and fittings as he could, and look out for another yacht.' Hunting for a good cruising yacht of the size of *Condor* was at that time not a very easy job, many of the boats in the hands of the agents having been out-classed, even so far as cruising races were concerned, and too long out of commission. Mackie came home from England, and was intrusted to superintend the building and fitting of a yawl of 160 tons, the order for which was placed with Mr. Fife, of Fairlie. This new boat was also named the *Condor*, and first appeared, under the old racing flag—a red anchor on a white ground—at the opening cruise of the Royal Northern Yacht Club, a little out of trim, and with sails far from being completely stretched. It was not till the Clyde regatta season came on that her captain had got her into fighting trim, and then she—well, showed that Fife had lost none of that cunning which he had exhibited in designing *Fiona*, *Cythera*, *Neva*, and *Bloodhound*. The *Jullanar*, Mr. Bentall's ocean plough, as this peculiarly designed and quaintly rigged craft was termed, was practically the yawl-queen, and fit to take her time of boats of other rigs. She met her match, however, in *Condor*, which, in a fairly sailed race, without any of those cruel flukes, very nearly saved her time on her English competitor. In the following week, on the famous Largs course, she did even better, and, but for a slight lull in the breeze which blew out of Rothesay Bay, would have won. As it was, she only lost by eleven seconds, which, after forty-eight miles' hard sailing in a stiff, steady breeze, was a mere fraction of time indeed. The feature of the sailing was the admirable way in which the boat was handled by a crew of Clyde natives, it hitherto always being thought to be the proper thing to have a yacht Clyde-built, and a crew of Englishmen, from Colchester or Itchen Ferry, to sail her. Captain Mackie was the first to dispel this view, and now there are any number of Clyde crews every bit as able to handle a Scotch-built boat, or an English one either, as the professional oyster dredgers of East Anglia, who make a living at the pastime when there are no 'r's' in the months, and oysters are out of season.

In the fall of 1879, at the close of the yachting season, His

Royal Highness the Prince of Wales purchased the then flying cutter *Formosa*. Mr. G. L. Watson was then anxious to distinguish himself as a naval architect, and of this, as also of *Vanduard's* early races, the writer has written much in *Fores's Sporting Notes*. Mr. Clark, who had himself witnessed Mr. Watson's successes in the ten and five-ton classes, gave him an order for a new ninety-ton cutter, which was to be raced by Mackie right round the land. At the same time Mr. Jameson, of Dublin, gave Mr. Richardson, of Liverpool, an order for a boat of somewhat similar size. With Fife's old *Cuckoo* coming out with new sails, and some improvements in the hull, also *Formosa*, an exciting season was promised; and an exciting season it did turn out. The Watson 'ninety' was built in Henderson's yard, where subsequently were built *Thistle*, *Britannia*, *Valkyrie*, and was the first cutter ever built entirely of steel. She had a hollow keel or bottom, was filled with molten lead, so that she carried all her ballast inside. The writer, who sailed in all her opening matches, also in *Condor* when she won her first race, which was from Lamlash Bay to Campbeltown Loch, has had the honour, also, of giving his reminiscences in the pages of the early numbers of this magazine. Punch's steel cutter *Punch Bowl* created something of a sensation by the way she won all her matches. *Samoaena* did not get out till the back-end, but picked up a lot of leeway, as, admirably handled by Harry Thomson, of *Vanguard* fame, who was succeeded in the second season by O'Neil, she won a lot of races in light weather. But, with the rapid advance in yacht-designing that set in, even the steel cutter's day was destined to be a short one; and Mr. Clark sold her to his brother, Mr. Stewart Clark, and gave Mr. Watson an order for a yawl of 120 tons. This was the powerful *Wendur*, a name now associated with her success in securing the Breton Reef Cups. *Wendur* was a handsome and powerful boat, and sailed some magnificent races, notably that round the Royal Northern course at Largs regatta. With *Marjorie* and *Irex* coming out, the competition grew keener, and she was only in her last years able to secure but a moderate share of winning plate. Captain Mackie, who was a somewhat excitable and high-strung man, on whom the reaction from a hard-sailed race told more severely than on skippers of milder temperament, had possibly lost a little of his nerve. Poor fellow, he pre-deceased the subject of these notes, who stinted him in nothing which would

contribute to success for years. In later life he became a great fancier of Scottish terriers, and representatives from his kennel won all the prizes at the Crystal Palace Shows.

Having done all he could for yacht-racing, Mr. Clark, who was fond of gun and rod, and rented shootings and fishings in Harris, where he made his yacht his home, gave Mr. Watson an order for a steamer of 750 tons. In this magnificent vessel, with Timson, who sailed in the *Cambria* in her American Cup matches, he has made cruises to different parts of the world, and in this, the Commodore ship of the Royal Clyde and Royal Largs Yacht Club, he has frequently dispensed his bountiful hospitality to yachtsmen in the Clyde and strangers during the regatta season. When the Clyde syndicate challenged for the America Cup with the *Thistle*, this magnificent vessel was kindly placed at the disposal of the Royal Clyde Yacht Club, and in New York yachting waters quite upheld the reputation of Scotchmen for hospitality. The Royal Largs Yacht Club will miss him much, and at the recent annual meeting of members it was resolved to record in the minutes their regret at his death. A bachelor who amassed a princely fortune, a kind, genial gentleman, fond of a joke, and holding a name which was a guarantee of social respect and commercial honour, it is well to hope that we have yet a few such amongst us who can come forward to advance the character of our healthy pastimes.

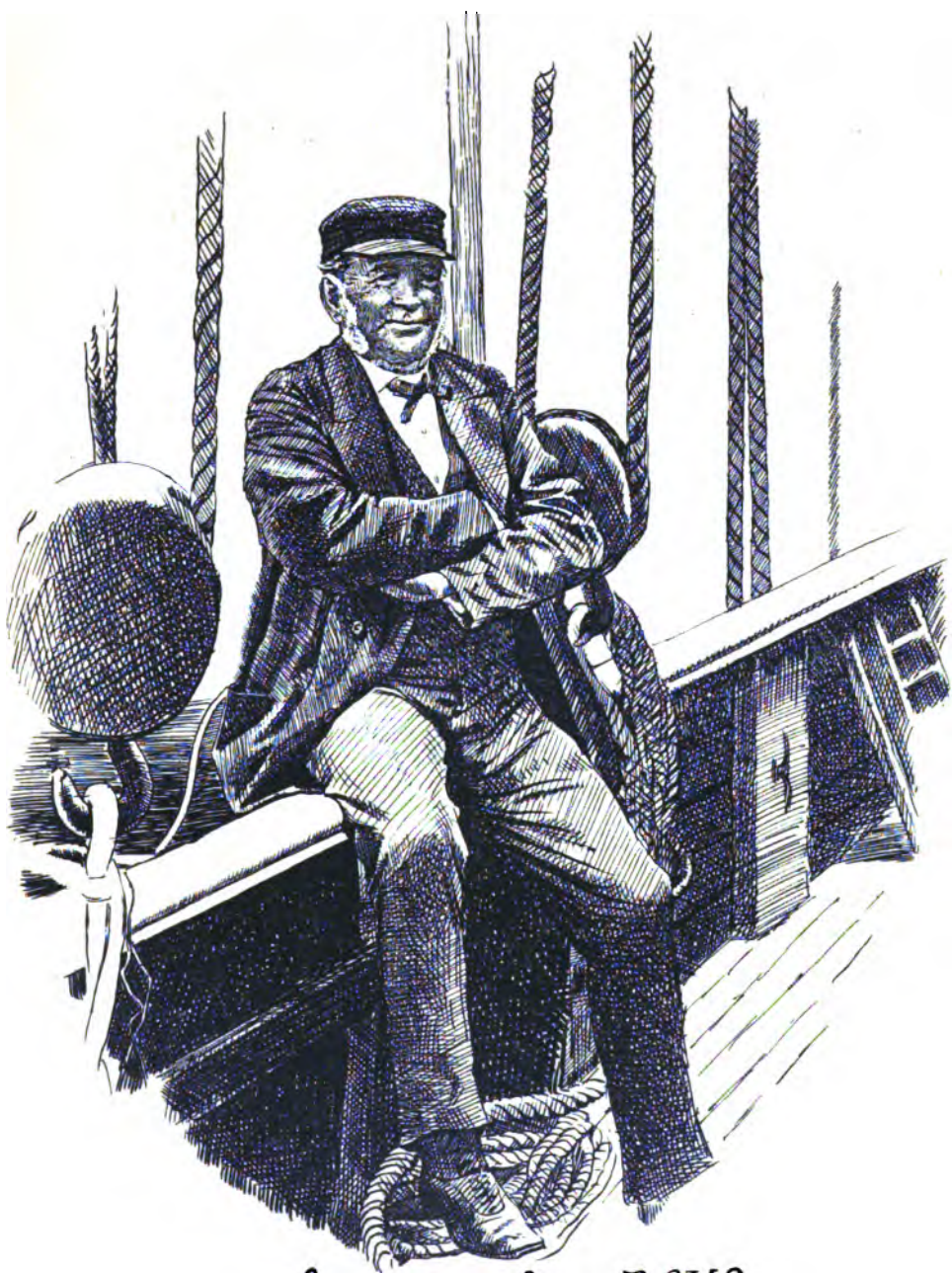
PUFFS FROM AN OLD PIPE.

By 'DOOKER.'

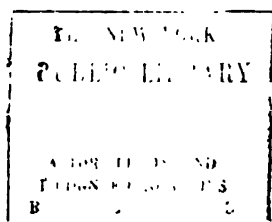


DEAR me, how terribly lazy I have been! Here we are in 1894, and never a 'puff' have I emitted since September, 1893. But you know 'My Lady Nicotine' always has an equally soporific effect on us pipes as on human beings; so, Mr. Fores, you must also be lenient, and not draft me for slackness.

I told you in my last I hoped to have another look at Jim's Sporting Diary, but in this I have been foiled, for he has never given me a chance; besides, even if the opportunity of priggling something from its pages had been afforded me, I fear it would be a case of *toujours perdrix*, or rather *toujours* tiger, bear, panther, boar, or bison. We have run the gauntlet of all these



Commodore Clark R.C.Y.C.



pretty well, and so I will drop personal adventures—for, like a good conservative pipe, I like to identify myself with my owner—and tell you of other sport, tales of which I have picked up.

Jim, you know, is a terrible man to talk sport, no matter where he may be. If he is in a railway carriage, and he spots a likely victim, he is sure to 'fix' him; the same in the hunting-field, the club, nay, even in drawing-rooms—though I know nothing of these latter exalted places—he rides his 'hobby precious hard. But this little failing of his comes in useful, for when indulging in such talks, he invariably pulls me out, and so I hear a good deal one way or another. Then, too, Jim has at times a habit of looking over, in the sanctity of his den, old letters; of course, on such occasions he lights me, and I then have an opportunity of reading some very interesting matters, of which I make notes. Let me give you an instance.

The other night Jim undid a bundle of letters, yellow with age, on which the ink was very faint, and selecting one, took it out of its envelope with a sigh and the exclamation, 'Poor old boy! *how* I wish I could see him now.' I am not romantic or sentimental—pipes never are—but I could not help sending up a little sympathetic cloud of smoke, for I remembered the writer, as true and honest an English gentleman, as gallant a soldier, and as good a sportsman as ever swung into saddle, or put rifle to shoulder. The letter was dated May, 1863—just thirty-one years ago—and written on foreign notepaper; it was hard to decipher the faded characters, but I think I can give you the gist of it, for I took copious notes by a process only known to myself, and for which I am going to take out a patent. The writer had just returned to Rawul Pindee from a trip to Cashmere, and after alluding to other sport, thus related the following incident:—

'You know I am not superstitious, but I had my unbelief in the supernatural rather rudely shaken during my trip. I had got up to Vi . . .' (rest of word illegible) 'and had made friends with the local nigger swell, who sent his own *shikari*, Yussuf by name, to guide me to the haunts of game. Of course I was soon pumping Yussuf as to what sort of shikar I might expect, and he told me of a certain wonderful *Bara Sing* (twelve horned), the great Cashmere stag, that was said to inhabit an adjacent range of hills. He was reputed to carry a colossal head of over twenty points, and to be invulnerable. Now, I knew that the Cashmere stag sheds its horns early in March, at a time before we are

allowed to come into the country,* and so I ridiculed the idea of any Englishman having had a shot at him, and told Yussuf it was owing to the rotten native powder and guns that the stag had not been shot. I was then told that *this stag never shed his horns!* Of course, I had to humour the man, for I saw he was a bit touchy, and not at all like the servile natives of the plains. However, to show him what I could do, I put up some empty beer bottles one hundred yards away on a rock, and broke five out of six. I then asked Yussuf if he thought my rifle was good enough to kill his wonderful stag.

“Wah-wah!” he exclaimed, “God knows—the Sahib’s bullets go straight, but this *hangul* (Cashmere for stag) bears a charmed life. Your Lordship’s bullets will do him no harm, *unless they are made of silver.*”

“Well, Yussuf,” I replied; “lead is good enough for me. Show me your stag within fair range, and I will shoot him.” But he wasn’t convinced a bit.

‘The next morning we started at three a.m. It was bitterly cold, and the waning moon cast faint and ghost-like shadows across our path, as we climbed the steep hill-side, on our way to find the spectral stag. It was a grand sight, old man; I wish you could have seen it. Above and far away towered the mighty snow-clad peaks, glistening in the soft moonlight, and contrasting vividly with the lower slopes, which were still enveloped in blueish grey clouds. Around us the tall pines and deodars soughed and rustled in the morning breeze, until one could almost fancy they were talking to one; and the scene altogether was most impressive—such grandeur and utter solitude combined—and so silent.

‘After a couple of hours’ hard walking, we at last reached the summit of a long grassy ridge, clothed with scattered birch and pine. This was very slippery walking, and had I not been wearing a pair of grass shoes, such as are always used in Cashmere, I must have more than once come to grief. It was ticklish ground, too, for we had to pick our way along the edge of frowning precipices, not very easy to see in the uncertain light, and where a single false step might have sent me tumbling down some three hundred feet on to the rocks below. At last we pulled up, and sat down to wait for daylight.

‘After about twenty minutes shivering under a rock, dawn

* These regulations are altered now.—[ED.]

began to break, and Yussuf, telling me to remain where I was with Saffin Meer (the shikari I had brought with me from Sirinuggur) and the two coolies who were carrying my lunch, cartridges, &c., crept off by himself to spy the country. It was icy cold, I can tell you, as the mist drifted round us, but the occasional noise of a stone rolling down the hill made me fancy game must be about, and kept me on the *qui vive*, whilst once the loud bell of a stag made me believe Yussuf's story.

'After an interval of about half an hour, he returned, saying he could not see anything, but from the deep tone of the stag we had heard, he thought it must be the one we were in search of. The sounds came up from a valley below, so, making a slight *détour* to get the wind, Yussuf, Saffin Meer, and I started on our stalk. Very cautiously we descended, slipping and creeping over the dew-laden grass and wet rocks, till, after we had gone about four hundred and fifty yards, Yussuf dropped, as if shot, behind a gigantic boulder of rock, and began drawing my rifle out of its cover. Quickly handing it to me, he pointed ahead through the floating clouds of mist. Putting on fresh caps, I squirmed my way past him, and peered very cautiously round a great granite slab. Man alive! you never saw such "a beastie" as I then beheld; for there, *not twenty yards* from me, stood the biggest stag I ever saw. He was simply gigantic, and his head seemed a perfect forest of horns! I counted sixteen points, and then, as his head went up, and the shifting wind evidently made him suspicious, I knew I must not delay. So, up went the rifle, and, aiming at his shoulder—I swear to you I was *dead* on him—I fired both barrels in quick succession.

'I would have bet the very shirt on my back that I had killed him, as the echoes of the discharge reverberated amongst the hills, and I jumped to my feet and dashed forward, expecting to see the noble animal dead—a tangible proof that this stag, at any rate, didn't require a silver bullet. But there was not a sign of him, not a drop of blood, not even a footprint on the damp herbage! He had vanished into space. I couldn't believe I had missed such a shot, and stumbled on, feeling sure I would come on him lying dead, or, at all events, hit on his tracks. Vain delusion! the further I went, the more apparent it became that I had missed, and missed shamefully, for not a sign, not a vestige, did we ever see of that stag, not a track to show that one had ever even stood where I had fancied this one did.

'My feelings you may imagine. In moody silence I returned

to my camp, and chewed the cud of bitterness. But at nightfall, when, discussing the programme of the next day's sport, I asked Yussuf what he thought had become of that stag, he replied solemnly :

“What did I tell the Sahib? That was *the* stag. No one will ever kill him, for he is not of this world.”

‘Of course, I ridiculed his statement, but I am half inclined to believe him. I never had another chance at this stag, for neither threats, bribes, nor any other inducements, would ever make Yussuf take me after him again, so I struck camp and moved to fresh ground, in search of markhor and bears.’

Then Jim put the letter back, and, as he knocked the ashes out of my bowl and put me away, I cannot tell you what was done with the markhor and bears.

Here, however, is a quaint extract. Jim is fond of old books of sport, and the other night he got hold of one written by a certain Dr. John Francis Gemelli Careri, entitled *A Voyage Round the World*. The doctor, who landed at Daman (then a city belonging to the Portuguese, now the road to which is one of the stations on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway) in 1695, when Mr. Nathaniel Higgison was Governor of our Fort St. George, gives the following quaint description of some of the animals observed by him during his stay in what he calls *Indostan*. I am able to give the extract *verbatim*, as my master—I hope he won't read this, and pitch into me for telling tales—went to sleep during his perusal of the book, and so I had every opportunity of making a copy. This is what the worthy and adventurous Doctor says :—

‘Daman is also very famous for all sorts of game ; for, besides all the *European* creatures, of Wild Boars, Wolves, Foxes, and Hares ; in the mountains there are those they call *Baccarreos*, in shape like Bucks, and in taste like Swine ; *Zambares*, whose bodies are like Oxen, and their Horns and Feet like those of a Stag ; *Gazelles*, which are like Goats ; *Dives*, like Foxes ; *Roses*, with the body like a Cow, so called from a Rose they have on the Breast ; the Male of this Species is called *Mera*, and has horns half a Span long, and the Body and Tail like a Horse ; Wolves like Stags with hairy Horns ; *European* Stags ; black Wild Cats, with Wings like those of Bats, with which they Skip and Fly from Tree to another, tho' they be far distant ; wild Horses and Cows. There are three sorts of Tygers, called *Bibo*, *Cito*, and the Royal, each differing from the other in bigness of Body, and

variety of Spots, it being their Property to be continually in search of wild Boars, these, taught to defend themselves by Nature, tumble in the Mire, and dry themselves in the sun so often, till the mud is crusted hard on them. Being thus arm'd, instead of being made a Prey, they often gore the Tygers with their sharp Tusks; for they, working with their Claws on the hard Mud, are a long time pulling it off, and by that means give the Boars time to kill them.

'The *Portugueses* have two ways of killing Tygers. One is lying conceal'd in a Ditch, near the Water where they come to Drink. The other, going in a Cart drawn gently through the Wood by Oxen, and then shooting them. But they use all their endeavours to hit them on the Forehead, for if the Tyger falls not the first Shot, it grows so enrag'd with the Hurt, that it certainly tears the Hunter in pieces.'

I confess to have chuckled hugely over this delicious account, which brought to mind many of the grim and outlandish creatures of heraldry and fiction. *Boccareos* was probably a corruption of the word *bikra* or *bhinkee*, by which name the little four-horned antelope (*A. quadricornis*) is generally known in Central India, though why they should have tasted like swine I am at a loss to conceive. However, as I am only a pipe, I may not pose as a judge in such matters. *Zambares* is very probably the sambhar, the phonetic sound of the word and the description of the animal favouring the assumption. *Dives*, I confess, beats me; but under *Roses* the description of the neilghau is excellent, for though in Central India it is called *ru-i*, it is known in the North-West Provinces as *roz* or *rojte*. By the 'rose they have on the Breast,' is probably meant the black tuft of hair the males have on their throats. 'Wolves like Stags, with hairy Horns' was a stumper, but on consideration the learned Doctor chose a fairly correct way of describing the muntjac (*Cervulus aureus*), the rib-faced deer, whose demoniacal expression of countenance, canine teeth, and hairy pedestal at the base of the horn, favour the delusion. And this might have been increased, had the little animal's hoarse bark been heard. 'Black Wild Cats with Wings' are, of course, the graceful Brown Flying Squirrels (*Pteromys petaurista*) of Southern India, who, sailing silently from the upper branches of some thickly-foliaged and lofty tree towards a lower one, may be frequently observed through the dim morning light and forest shade. The Mahratta term for panther is *beebeea*, and from this probably the worthy Doctor got the word *Bibo*, which

he applies to the 'three sorts of Tygers.' *Cito* is evidently the cheetah or hunting leopard (*Felis jubatu*), but the sun must have been much hotter, and the mud more easily baked in those days than it is now, for though I have seen many boars, I have never beheld such a 'hog in armour' as old Gremelli describes.

Talking of boar, I remember once, when Jim was out, that—but I forgot, I promised not to talk pig any more, and so will wind up by telling you the following story of shikar, which was related to Jim by the principal actor in it. I cannot give you his name, for that would be a 'breach of privilege,' but I may tell you that he is a well-known sportsman, and one who has shot many fine *oves poli* in that great barren and frozen waste the Pamirs or Steppes. Jim always urged him to write a book of his travels and adventures, but sportsmen, except when in pursuit of their game, are somewhat indolent, and laggards with the pen, and, as far as I know, the suggestion has never come to anything. Thus C—— narrated a bit of sport which shows what an Englishman will dare. I will cut a good deal of what C—— said at first, and ask you to transport yourselves one day in early June, to the Steppes, and imagine that a herd of *poli* had just been spotted. C—— thus continued :

'As I watched the sky line above me, every now and again one or more heads would appear. They were evidently grazing in my direction on the opposite side, and were actually coming to be shot at. Presently one showed himself, and came over into the ravine where I lay. He was soon followed by one or two others ; they were sportively inclined, and butted at each other as they went pottering along, scratching their backs on the stones like tame sheep. At last, they came within one hundred and fifty yards of me, but I did not fire, for I had seen some better heads among the herd. When they had all crossed the sky line, and the moment the last disappeared over it, I rushed down the slope, and scrambled up the opposite side, hard on their tracks. On reaching the crest I lay panting, with the whole herd, a dozen in all, in full view. At length I selected a ram who was standing broadside on, about a hundred and thirty yards off. Just as I got my sight on him, he turned towards me a bit. I felt pretty sure of him, however, and pulled. The herd, except the ram fired at, then bolted ; he stood still as if stunned, and I expected to see him drop every minute, but he recovered himself, and slowly followed his companions. I then gave him my other barrel, and hit him on the haunch, but he went away on three

legs. In the meanwhile the herd had gone right away, and feeling pretty sure of my beast, I did not at once follow him up, thinking he would lie down if left alone. I watched him for some time going at a steady pace, till he disappeared over a spur opposite, and then I followed best pace. When I got to the spot where I had last seen him, I had a good view of the slopes beyond, but for some time I could not make him out at all. At last I spotted him, but a long way below, still keeping on steadily. This was a sell: still there was plenty of blood on the track, and I had no fear of losing him. I knew pretty well how far a *poli* ram could go when wounded, but this fellow was the toughest beast I ever came across. He went down the slopes, stopping every now and then to look about, till he got to the base of the hills, and almost on to the flat plain below. He then turned straight towards my camp. Going down to where I had last seen him, I took up his tracks, and though the ground was very stony, the blood stains made following him up easy enough. Twice in the first mile I nearly got up to him, just getting a sight of his head over the rocks, but on each occasion that was all I could see, and so I did not fire. After continuing along the side of the range for some time, he turned up and crossed over a spur. I thought the pull up the hill would stop him, but not a bit, on he went, as straight as ever. I followed him on to the end of the spur; he then doubled round this, and got on to some very stony ground, where tracking was difficult, as the blood from his wounds had ceased to flow, and a drop or two here and there was all that was visible. I thought he had probably lain down under a rock, and so proceeded very cautiously. At last, to my great disappointment, we got on to the pamir below, which was about four miles across, and if he had gone over this to the opposite range of hills, I knew I should have great difficulty in getting up to him before nightfall, as it was now late in the afternoon. Carefully I 'spied' the plain, but not a sign of my friend could I see, so once more I took up his tracks. About half a mile from the hills I came to the river. This was a regular stumper; it was frozen over, with the exception of about twenty yards in the centre, with great ice floes gliding by on the rapid current. The trail showed me my quarry must have swum across, and if I wanted to bag him I must follow. My shikari said it was impossible to do this, and it did look rather like it. I felt I was done, for it was too cold to swim, and had I attempted to do this I should probably have been seized with cramp before going many yards.

'Language, my dear fellow? Yes, I fear I did use some beginning with very big D's. But at last, as I looked about, an inspiration seized me. A block of ice about eight yards square came floating down my side; if it was thick enough, we could utilise it as a raft to bear us over. So I determined to chance it, and, calling to my shikari to follow me, jumped quickly on it as it floated by. It gave a wobble or two, but bore us all right, and we floated quickly down stream. The current made our impromptu raft twist about a bit, but eventually we were swung across to the opposite edge. This occurred sooner than I expected, and directly we were close enough we jumped off, the ice edge on which we landed giving a great crack as we did so. It fortunately held, however, and our Rubicon was passed!

'It was pretty plain sailing then, and, taking up the track, we soon make out our beast ascending the lower slopes of the opposite hills. He did not go very far, however, before he lay down, and I set to work to try and stalk him. Unfortunately, the wind was blowing down the mountain. I tried every possible means of approaching him, but it was no good, he commanded the situation; so, as evening came on, and I was a good six miles from camp, I had reluctantly to give him up and trust to picking him up next day. Fortunately I found a place where the river was frozen over entirely, so did not have to risk crossing it on an ice raft again.

'The next morning I was up early and, crossing the pamir, got to where I had left my wounded ram. He had moved, however, and there was nothing for it but to track again. Knowing he would be stiff, and that I might come upon him at any moment, I proceeded very cautiously, with my rifle all ready, in case I came on him suddenly. As I was popping about amongst the stony ravines, I heard some stones rattle down the steep hillside above. There was a ram right enough, but not surely my three-legged one! How could he have climbed so high? I put the glass on him, and then discovered it was my wounded animal, going, apparently as strong as ever, on three legs. It was misery, and I was fairly disheartened, for where and when would the brute stop? I watched him go along the face of the cliff for a bit, then turn up a narrow rift that cut it, and, after looking about a bit, lie down.

'The wind now blew up the hill, and this necessitated my making a long and laborious *détour* till I got above the ram. This took some time, and when I reached a coign of vantage and

looked down the hillock, I could not make him out. Could he have moved again? Could some eddy of the constantly shifting wind have betrayed my presence? I could not quite see the bottom of the nullah, and if the ram was laying in it, he would be out of sight until I walked right on top of him. However, to make sure, I sent my shikari up above, to see if the tracks led over the top of the ridge, not far from where I lay. He had not gone far, when he came slithering down again in great excitement, and told me he had spotted the ram in the nullah below. He showed me the exact spot, so I started off as quickly as the nature of the ground would permit. It was ticklish walking, very steep, and here and there heaps of loose shale had to be avoided.

'Nearer and nearer I got to the spot where I knew my *ovis* lay, and any one who has been in a similar situation can fancy how my heart beat and pulse throbbed at what I thought would be a successful *finale* to two days' hard work. At last I got nearly to the edge of the water course, which I reckoned to be about eight feet deep. It was a thrilling moment. I was just meditating crawling up the few remaining yards, when I heard some stones rattle down the nullah. There was a pause, up came a head, then a body, and there was my friend within ten yards of me! A bang, a crash, and over he went, head over heels, shot through the heart, and—finished at last!

'Now give me a drink, for goodness' sake,' said C—— as he concluded his story; 'and do put down that beastly pipe.'

I received this last observation—this very rude observation—more in sorrow than in anger, for I had taken the greatest interest in the pursuit above described, and was quite prepared to emit congratulatory puffs of smoke. But I hope, whatever other faults I may own to, malice is not one, and so I will continue the story.

After a good pull at a long tumbler, and in reply to a question or two of Jim's, C—— thus went on:

'This was certainly the toughest animal I ever had anything to do with. My first bullet had caught him on the horn, and just saved his shoulder, as you will remember he turned when I fired at him. The second had hit him in the haunch, and smashed his thigh, and yet he had gone on over miles of country, up hill and down, swum a river, and given me the best part of two days' hard work to get him.'

'What sort of head had he?' enquired Jim.

'Not so good as I expected,' was the reply, 'only about fifty

inches, but it was a very symmetrical one, spreading well out, and looked bigger than it was in reality. But I think I value it more than any I have got.'

'Did you——' began Jim—but no, really I must stop, or Mr. Fores will be shaking his fist at me, and calling me all sorts of names. In fact, I can hear him applying such epithets as 'garrulous,' 'prosy,' 'don't know when to stop,' &c., and his forehead will probably begin to wrinkle—an ominous sign this—so, with this last 'puff,' I'll say good-night.

'QUID PRO QUO.'

By 'LEATHERHUNTER.'



JOE HAND and Tom Hardy held neighbouring lands,
 Not far from the spot where the 'horseshoe town' stands
 Surrounded by well-to-do farmers and squires,
 The capital town of the least of our shires.
 Both rode to the hounds when the woodlands were sere,
 And wielded the willow when springtime drew near;
 Since schooldays between these two farmers had been,
 In shooting and hunting, a rivalry keen.
 Tom carried the honours at taking a leap,
 But frequently failed a calm temper to keep;
 He'd pounded poor Joe, and he'd wiped both his eyes,
 In 'Fifty,' and borne off the cattle show prize
 At Oakham, in spite of Joe's prime shorthorn steer;
 But Hand looked complacent as Easter drew near.
 Quoth Joe, 'Let the season once open, I'll make
 A wager revenge on friend Hardy to take.'
 At length the time came, when they opened the ball
 By matching the players of Buckminster Hall
 'Gainst those who from Oakham and neighbourhood hail,
 The pick of the players in fair Catmos Vale.
 Tom Hardy was chosen to captain this band,
 While 'Buckminster Hall' gave the post to Joe Hand;
 Small hope had the latter—the Rutland were strong:
 Says Joe, 'Never mind, my lads, I may be wrong,
 But here's my opinion—I firmly believe
 The card that will score us the game's up my sleeve.
 Though Tom's a good captain, well versed in the game,
 When once out of temper he isn't the same;
 With wits all astray, like a man in a dream,
 Sharp words he'll exchange with each man in his team.

When fielders get sulky, and bowlers grow tame,
The opposite side gets the best of the game.
I think, then, their plans we shall manage to foil,
If I can contrive Tom's sweet temper to spoil.'
'Quite true,' quoth Will Screeton, 'but that game takes two ;
Just mind that he don't turn the tables on you.'
'Now, Didymus ! Pray on our Buckminster plan
Don't flourish the rose of your watering-can,
But step on the green like a man full of pluck,
And not like a fellow who's down on his luck.'
'Oh, well ; while you're captain we'll give you full sway,
And all through the match show our very best play ;
But spoiling Tom's temper you'll find rather hard,
I happen to know that he's well on his guard.'
'Quite likely ; but, still, I know what I'm about—
I'll wait till I'm "out of the wood" ere I shout.'

* * * * *

The pitch was a good one, the copper was spun,
Joe cried 'Heads !' which it was, so Buckminster won ;
Mirabile dictu, first innings they yield,
Give Oakham the willow, and turn out to field !
Tom Hardy felt queer, and his troubles began
On getting 'first ball' from a *left-handed man* !
For years he had played, and two right-handed men
Had trundled for Buckminster nine times in ten ;
This man was a stranger, and Tom grew irate :
Says he, 'These left-handers I mortally hate ;
It's clear as the day, Joe's been laying a plan
To get me a "duck"—that's no Buckminster man.'
He played through the 'over,' however, with care,
A 'maiden' it proved, which with Hardy was rare,
For he was a man to keep rolling the ball—
His scoring for years was remarkably 'tall.'
When 'over' was called, then, conceive his dismay
On finding another left-hander to play !
His partner just managed the first one to snick
For one, and to get it they had to be quick.
Tom couldn't block through the next over at all,
His stumps were deranged at the very last ball,
Which proved a sad thing, for the Catmos Vale lot,
With scarce an exception, went in for a 'rot.'
The record was small when the innings was o'er,
The home team were out for a paltry threescore.

* * * * *

So now 'twas the turn of the Men of the Wold
To flourish the willow—the wickets to hold.

The left-handed bowlers came out as first pair :
 Will Screeton said, ' Mind now you play him with care,
 For Tom is a demon, unless he has lost
 His temper, as you will find out to your cost.'
 ' Left-handed batsman ! ' cries Tom, with a grip on the ball
 And look that gave presage of wickets to fall.
 The fielders crossed over, the umpire cried ' Play !'
 But Oakham men oft-times relate how that day
 The batsman turned *right-hand* and opened the score
 By getting the first one to *leg* for a four !
 They were both *ambidextrous* ! No matter which side
 Poor Tom put his fielders, the willow they plied
 The opposite way ! The crack bowler went wild,
 As captain about as much use as a child.
 His team grew demoralised, all things went wrong,
 The Buckminster team hit the runs off ere long,
 Joe Hand in delight flung his cap in the air,
The match was well won and six wickets to spare !

A NICE PREDICAMENT !

By SIDNEY PHIPPS.



SUPPOSE a prudent man, under the circumstances, would have kept the horse for Ascot, or for the Autumn Handicaps, but, stranded at the last moment as we were, I really don't see how we could have acted otherwise than we did.

Personally, I had always looked upon him as a moderate horse, but Rice, who trained for me then, said he was confident he would win a fairish handicap sooner or later. So, instead of running him in selling races, as I should have done if I had been guided by my own opinion, we kept messing him about all through his three-year-old season, putting him in second-class handicaps, and maiden plates, and that kind of thing, and he never won a halfpenny. I was fool enough to back him once or twice, and to tell the truth I was getting pretty well sick of him.

We gave him a rough-up with the two-year-olds early in January, and he seemed just as bad as ever. Still, I entered him in the Lincoln Handicap and the 'City,' more for the sake of seeing what weight they would give him than with any intention of running him, and it was only because he got in so



The little devil! - he'll make another Archer.



ludicrously light at Epsom that I accepted with him. He'd got 6 st. 8 lb.—which, for a four-year-old who had been backed two or three times with a stone more in fair company as a three-year-old, wasn't bad. At the same time, I had been so disappointed with him, that if they had put 6 st. on his back I shouldn't have expected to see him win.

It was on the 3rd of March that we first had our eyes opened a bit. On the morning of that day we gave the whole lot, barring the youngsters, a good old-fashioned Yorkshire gallop, without their clothes, over six furlongs. We didn't expect to get any very accurate line, but had adjusted the weights in some sort of fashion, based on a rough calculation of our own, and we thought we should at any rate find out what was worth going selling-plating with and what ought to be shot. There were nine of them. It was quite a sight to see them charging along in line, for all the world like a squad of cavalry! 'Go on, ride 'em clean out, and let us see what they're made of!' had been Rice's injunction to the lads. I couldn't help laughing to see them. I looked upon the whole thing more as a farce than anything else—a little bit of sport not to be taken seriously. But of course I watched them with a good deal of interest. When they had gone four furlongs, they were almost in a dead line; then one or two began to get uneasy, and gradually dropped back; at five furlongs they were all beat bar one; and when they passed us at the six furlongs that one was clean out by himself, and the boy could hardly hold him. I looked at Rice, and Rice looked at me. We couldn't believe our eyes. The thing that had made hacks of every horse in the stable was Zulu Chief, the animal I have been telling you about. We had thought that, if anything, we had lumped too much weight on him, and should not have been surprised—at least, I shouldn't—if he had cut up badly; but here he was playing with them as if they had been a herd of donkeys, and it looked like taking another 2 st. to bring them together.

'Do you think it's right?' I said.

'I don't know whether it's right or whether it's wrong,' Rice answered; 'but I know this—if it's right he'll win the City and Suburban as sure as ever I sit on this pony.'

'I can't make it out,' I continued, as we made our way back to the town. 'How can I back the brute? Look here, we must borrow something, and try him again. What do you think?'

'We'll see about that. I don't like borrowing horses if it

can be helped. It don't do you no good for other people to know all about what you've got. Still, we musn't throw away a chance. We could get Agamemnon from Garfield—and I wouldn't want a better trial horse.'

'Well,' I said, 'I leave that to you. I'll come up to Newmarket any day you let me know ; only the sooner the better.'

I went back to town, and in due course received a note from Rice, saying he would like to try the horse next morning. So I went up to Newmarket that night, and was on the Heath at half-past seven. You may judge I was pretty anxious, for winning a race like the 'City' is no everyday occurrence to me. I have never flown very high, and am not in the habit of betting in any great sums, but I have a certain amount of ambition, and have also enough pluck to put down my money when I fancy my chance a bit out of the ordinary. A horse of mine wouldn't win a City and Suburban without doing me a bit of good, you bet.

Rice had made all arrangements for a good trial, and there seemed no possibility of making a mistake. He had engaged young Tempest to ride Zulu Chief, and Fred Harding was on Agamemnon, while Garrett rode Red Ink, and a stable-boy Carte-de-Visite. It took place across the flat. The distance nominally was a mile and a quarter—that is to say, from where Rice, Garfield, and myself stood ; but so far as Agamemnon and Zulu Chief were concerned we were really trying them at a mile, as that was Agamemnon's best distance, and we knew Zulu Chief would stay the extra quarter. We didn't want to show our hands too plainly, and of course all the reporters and touts were about. I need not give a detailed description of the spin. Carte-de-Visite, with 6 st. on his back, was tailed off, Red Ink was really beat at the six furlongs, though he was in front of everything when they passed us, and Zulu Chief simply smothered his trial horse ! When I tell you what weights we tried them at you'll hardly believe me. I wanted to give the Chief 14 lbs. the best of it, but Rice said, 'No, we will let 'em run at 7 lb., and if ours gets within a couple of lengths of yours, Garfield, we shall know we can put our money down.' So that's how they ran, and Agamemnon never had a look in. On that trial I'd back the Chief to give him 5 lb. at a mile any day of the week. And here was Agamemnon in the Lincoln Handicap with 8 st. 3 lb., and in the City and Suburban with 8 st.—ay, and not badly treated in either race on public form. No wonder we thought we had found a good thing ! Our horse

was improving every day, and the weight he'd got to carry was 6 st. 8 lbs.

I tell you, when we got back to Chennell's we had a bottle on it, and thought we'd earned it. Garfield was as astonished as we were—more so, because he'd pooh-poohed the other gallop, where Zulu made such hacks of the selling-platers. He said he'd never had Agamemnon better, and up to now he reckoned he'd got more than an outside chance at Lincoln. 'But what to do now, I don't know,' he said. 'I think I'll send him ; then we can see what sort of chance yours has got.'

This we persuaded him to do, and on the following Wednesday the chief interest of the handicap, as far as we three were concerned, lay in watching him. If he ran at all creditably, I for one meant to go for the gloves at Epsom. When he ran a respectable fourth, beating Lawn Mower, Eustace, Rhododendron, and the rest of the cracks, you can judge we were on fairly good terms with ourselves.

As soon as the Lincoln Handicap was over two or three books were opened on the Epsom race, and we soon found there were plenty of people to nibble at ours. Still, they didn't do much harm, only small sums going on, and they never took less than twenty-fives. I waited till the market had settled down a bit, then told Yorke what I wanted done. He had managed one or two little commissions for me already, and I thought if I did it myself I should probably only make a mess of it. I had 800*l.* on at first ; then I had another 300*l.* (the average price coming out at just under 15 to 1) ; and on the Monday before the race I took 1000*l.* to 80*l.* twice myself, off Fry. Altogether, therefore, I stood to win just about 18,500*l.*, not counting a few pounds extra which I had put on for the stable-lads. Of course, this would not be much for a great many men ; but it was a good bit for me.

So far, everything had gone well. The horse was going great guns, and we reckoned he was a good 7 lb. better than when we tried him. Our money was nicely on ; and so far as we could gather, there was nothing in the handicap which was looked upon as anything out of the common. Several stables were pretty sweet, of course, but there was no Ormonde in with 6 st. on his back. And to crown all, in George Moore we had one of the best light-weights of the day to ride for us. Altogether we had every reason to be satisfied.

Well, the great day that was to make all our fortunes arrived

at last. We got the horse safely to Epsom, and he did a nice steady canter on the downs in the morning, looking just grand, and going as free and well as possible. Our confidence was a pretty open secret by this time; though being a small, unfashionable stable, there was no likelihood of our horse becoming favourite, or anything like it. That position had been held for ten days past by Copal Varnish, who was said to have come on a lot; while both Cheapside and Mungo Park were very firm. But we didn't care a straw for anything.

Zulu Chief was early in the paddock, and I stood watching him, while they were saddling for the first race. He was walking up and down by the hedge, on the further side. As I was admiring him, I saw Moore coming across to me. I went to meet him.

'Morning, George,' I said; 'horse looks well enough, eh?'

'Look here, sir; I am sorry, I was just coming to tell you—the fact is, when I said I'd ride for you I'd clean forgotten I'd already promised to ride Lord Warkton's mare. I hope it won't inconvenience you?'

'What the something or other do you mean?' I asked, and it is quite possible that I didn't speak in the voice of a lamb.

'I mean I made a mistake, sir; I've got to ride Roseleaf, and you'll have to get somebody else to ride yours.'

'Oh, don't you make any error!' I rejoined. 'We'll have no nonsense, if you please. You engaged yourself to ride my horse, and by Gad, you'll have to ride!'

'Well, you'll have to speak to Lord Warkton about it. If he likes to let me off, well and good; but as things are, I'm engaged to him.'

'We'll soon see about that.' And I strode off in a frenzy to find the man.

At the best of times he's not a beauty to talk to, and to-day he was in a less amiable frame of mind than usual. We stormed at each other for ten minutes, and I threatened every mortal thing I could think of; but he swore he'd engaged the lad ten days ago at Hurst Park, and neither threats nor bribes, nor anything else, would induce him to forego his claim. I then and there offered Moore 1000*l.* if he won on my horse, and 100*l.* if he was beat; but he was as obstinate as the other, and it was clear the pair had got some little game in hand which I knew nothing of.

Here was I in a pretty predicament! It was time to weigh out—in fact, half the jockeys were already weighed—and I was left high and dry without any one to ride for me! I, and Garfield, and Rice, and Charlie Wilson scoured the place to find

some one, tearing about from the paddock to the weighing-room, and from the weighing-room to the paddock, all with no result—every confounded boy who could do anything approaching the weight was already engaged. It was a big field, and the run on light-weights was prodigious. I think Rice was the only one of the lot that didn't lose his head. He pulled me into a corner of the weighing-room enclosure, and said :—

'Look here, sir! it's no good messing about. There are three things open to you: you can scratch the horse, and lose your money, and run him in the Hunt Cup; or you can put Carrol up with 10lb. overweight; or you can let my own boy ride. Now, which will you do?'

I hesitated.

'Any more runners?' cried the clerk of the scales. 'Is Cupid going, or Diogenes, or Zulu Chief, or Linen?'

'Which is it to be, sir?—quick!' said Rice.

'Please yourself! I leave it to you.'

'Then he'll run, and the boy shall ride!—Yes, sir' (rushing into the weighing-room), 'Zulu Chief goes!'

'Make haste, then!' exclaimed the clerk of the scales, looking at his watch. 'We're behind time already.'

How we ever got that boy dressed and weighed in time I don't know. I can see him now, sitting in the scale, breathless and excited, with nothing on but his breeches and cap, with the strings hanging down, clasping under one arm the saddle and cloth, and under the other his boots and jacket. Then, when he was passed, there was the tug-of-war with his boots, while poor old Rice, blowing like a grampus, bundled off to the paddock with the saddle. We kept everybody waiting, and they were all yelling and swearing at us; but we had the horse saddled in a twinkling, and Rice just had time to give a few rough instructions to the lad (who was white and trembling with excitement), when the word was given to lower the rope, and the twenty-one horses passed out at walking pace to show themselves off in front of the stand.

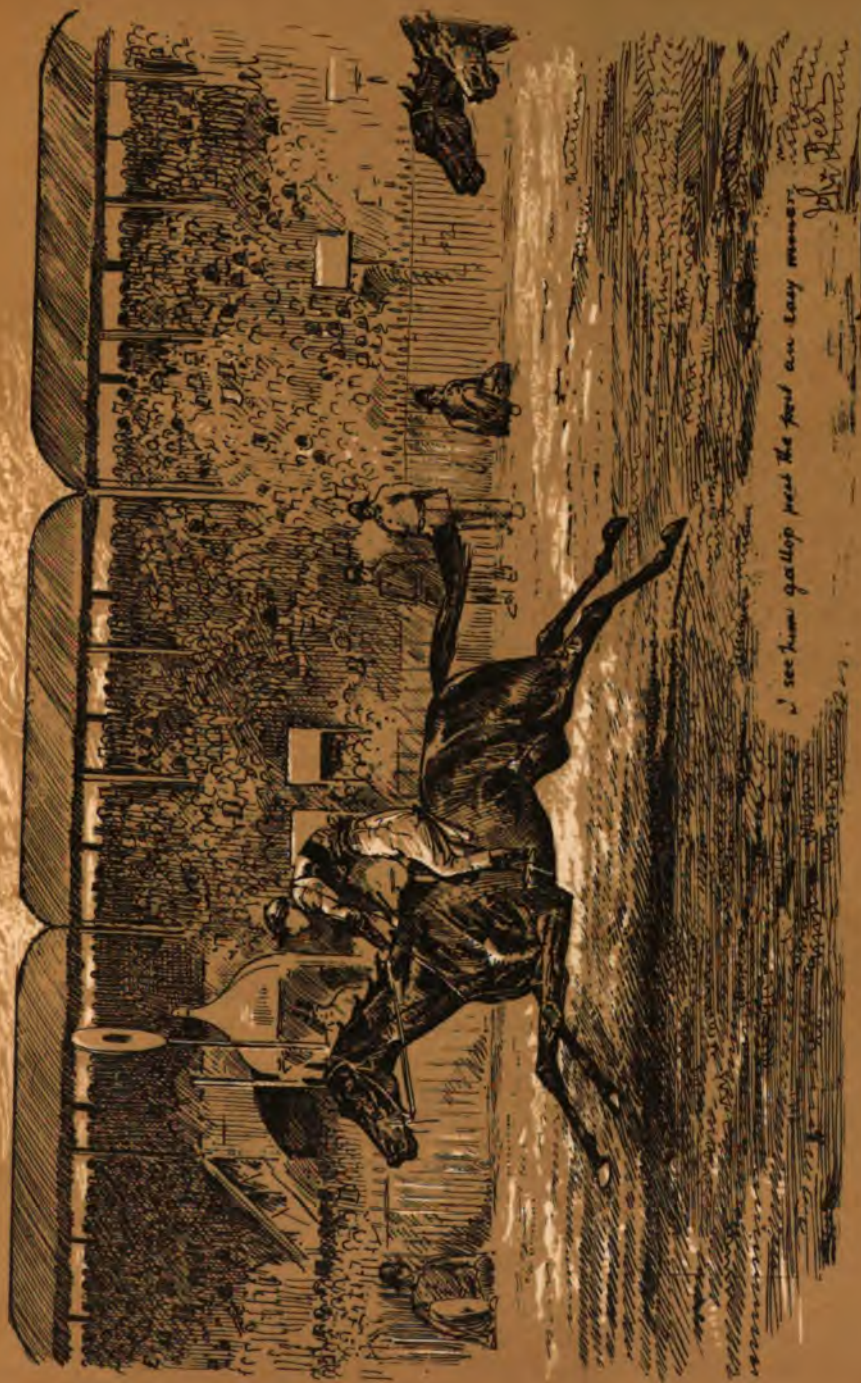
Rice led the horse himself, and I walked by his side as far as Tattersall's. He didn't say much to the boy—only told him to keep his head, go down to the post quietly, get well away, hold him together coming down the hill and especially round the corner, make the best of his way home when he was in the straight, and, whatever he did, not to cut it finer at the finish than he need. 'And, look here, my boy,' he said, 'don't you think we shall blame you if you get beat. Don't let

'em flurry you ; hold him together down the hill, and he'll do all you want him to do up the straight—see?' And then I left them, and made my way across to Tattersall's.

He obeyed the first part of his orders to the letter. He went quietly down to the post, and got well away when the flag dropped. Zulu Chief was a nice horse to ride, but the lad—he was little more than a kid—had never had a silk jacket on before in his life, except to ride a trial, and the confusion and excitement of being suddenly called upon to ride at a moment's notice was enough to upset much more experienced heads than his.

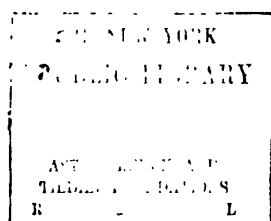
As a rule, I like to watch every horse in a race, but I was too flustered now to notice what anything was doing bar my own, and I never moved my eyes from that yellow cap. He was in the ruck all through the furze, and would be about seventh or eighth as they swooped down the hill. I watched him very anxiously then. I was afraid of the hill, and I was still more afraid of the corner. He began to flounder a little—just as I thought he would. I would have given 500*l.* straight out of my pocket at that moment to have had Tempest or Moore on his back. He wanted a man to hold him together—a weak boy was no good. Still, he didn't lose so much ground as I expected.

'And now for a wide sweep!' I inwardly ejaculated, as they approached the corner. The Chief was always awkward round bends, and I fully expected to see him run clean out. But he did nothing of the sort. He swept round like a polo pony, and from the position of the boy's legs, I saw that this was due entirely to his riding, and that he had not been carried round by something else. 'Magnificent! The little devil!—he'll make another Archer, if ever I saw one!' I cried in my delight and astonishment. But why doesn't he take his place? Copal Varnish, Roseleaf, and Mungo Park are all lengths in front of him, and going well. Ah! he's beginning to ride now. He is creeping up to them. Hallo! Mungo Park's done! Copal Varnish and the other are side by side, both going strong. 'Go on, boy! don't let 'em get too far away from you!' He seems as if he heard me, for he sits down and rides. My heart is thumping in a childish way. For two hundred yards he rides in determined fashion, then he loses his stride, and the reins slip through his fingers. He pulls them right again, and looks round. He is flurried now. He tries to ride again. The horse responds, but the lad is dead beat. He rides him for a few strides, then the reins slip again, and he seems as if he is going to fall out of the saddle.



I see him gallop past the post an easy manner
 with a jockey on his back
 who is a peerless
 rider

the jockey is a peerless
 rider
 who is a peerless
 rider



It is all up now. He is as weak as a kitten, and is stopping the horse rather than helping him.

Copal Varnish and Roseleaf are racing neck and neck. It is a match between them. I give up watching mine, because it sickens me to do so, and look at those two. Opposite the Bell there is nothing to choose between them. They are both dead beat, and it is simply a question of which will last the longer. It looks a shade of odds on Copal Varnish. Then all of a sudden, as I am about to strap up my case, after mechanically replacing my glasses, I hear a yell from a hundred thousand throats: 'What price Zulu Chief? Zulu Chief wins! I'll lay 5 to 1 bar Zulu Chief!' And—thinking I know not what, hoping I know not what, expecting I know not what—I look at my horse. And I see that the lad is sitting down in the saddle like an old hand, and is riding with resolution and strength; I see the horse answering like a locomotive engine to its driver; I see him gaining on the two animals in front of him as though they were common hacks; I see him pass them, apparently leaving them standing still; and I see him gallop-past the post an easy winner by nearly half-a-dozen lengths!

It was like a dream. I could hardly believe my eyes. The sudden revulsion of feeling momentarily dazed me. I had seen my horse hopelessly beaten; I had made up my mind to bear it like a gentleman; I had forced myself to watch the finish between the other two—and lo! here was my horse, after all, the winner; after all, the hero; and I, after all, twenty thousand pounds the richer! 'I have won!' I kept saying to myself; 'I have won! The *coup* has come off! It is all right! I have won!' But for at least three minutes I felt almost like a drunken man.

As soon as he had passed the post and had dropped his hands, the boy was as helpless as a mouse. The horse galloped clean into the paddock, and half way round it, before he could pull him up. As Rice led him back to weigh in, he sat in the saddle like a sack of flour. His face was white, and at every inspiration he caught his breath. When he dismounted, he almost fell. As he undid the girths, his legs trembled so that he could hardly stand. He with difficulty got into the scale. He was passed 'All right!' and before he could climb out again, he fainted clean off.

We soon brought him round with a little drop of brandy, and if he had been a son of the Prince of Wales, and heir to the British throne, we couldn't have made more fuss over him.

'He pulled all the strength out of my arms coming down the:

hill,' he said; 'I never knew him pull so; and when we got round the bend I felt just nohow. I knew *he* wasn't beat, and I kept him going as best I could, but my arms felt like dropping off, as if they'd got no feeling in them, and my head was going round, and I didn't know what was going to happen. I tried to go on riding, but I couldn't. I'd got no breath or no strength left. So I gave it up for lost, and felt fairly ready to grizzle. Then, quite suddenly, my head got clear again, and the feeling came back in my arms. I pulled myself together, and caught hold of his head, and set him going. He answered like an angel, and I just rode him for all I was worth. Before I'd gone ten strides I knew I should catch them, 'cos they'd properly beat themselves racing with each other. And I did—and s'welp me, if I'd been in training for a week, I should have won by a blooming hundred yards!'

But six lengths was good enough for me; and I reckon the boy thought it was good enough for him, too, when I gave him a little slip of paper next Monday. There is no mistake about it, we were in a nasty hole, but we got out of it all right.

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.



FROM the prolific and talented pencil of Finch Mason has recently been produced a set of four steeple-chasing subjects, entitled *The Billiard Stakes*, that will appeal to sportsmen who are cueists or *vice versa*. The first one is called *A Cannon off the Red*, and shows three sportsmen negotiating a fence, the centre one (white with black spots) cannoning against a rider in red, and making it very uncomfortable for his left-hand friend in white. *Green on Yellow, Red's your Player*, presents 'yellow' on hands and knees endeavouring to scramble from the ground at the moment that green is falling upon him, the catastrophe being produced by the grey mount of the latter having stopped short at the fence; coming along in precisely the same line, but taking a pull at his horse, is red, too closely in the rear to be pleasant. In *Taking the Pool* is seen an unhappy rider embracing his horse's neck as he is struggling from the water, having evidently jumped short, while two even less fortunate jockeys are struggling with the fluid. *The Striker don't Win for a Pony* brings us to

the last hurdle, the leading rider making strong play with his whip, while three or four in close attendance are going fairly strong. Altogether, they are as crisp and bright as anything that has proceeded from this artist's pencil, and are eminently calculated to adorn billiard or smoking rooms. Messrs. Fores, of Piccadilly, are the publishers.

Very tenderly and artistically treated are the four coloured prints, also published by Messrs. Fores, after the water-colour drawings by John Beer, illustrating the *Life of a Racehorse*. The first plate introduces us to *Mother and Son* reposing in a spacious and comfortable stall, and here the maternal sentiment is exquisitely rendered. It is equally so in plate 2, called *The Nursery*, a glorious paddock, where mare and foal may be seen musing (perhaps conversing, who knows?) under the shadow of grand spreading trees. Plate 3, *Training*, represents the colt receiving his preliminary lessons, and making acquaintance with whippcord. The scenery here somewhat resembles Kingsclere, so that the education may possibly be that of Ormonde; and in the fourth plate, foreshortened towards the spectator, our hero is seen as *The Winner* of the Derby.

The Wilderness Hunter, by Theodore Roosevelt, will be welcomed by sportsmen who make big game their quarry. The pursuit of buffalo, bison, moose, elk, deer, bighorn, black and grisly bear, amongst other large game frequenting the American wilderness, is graphically and smartly described, whilst the smaller varieties of fur and feather are not neglected. The book is anecdotal, descriptive, and at times thrilling, while the conviction is ever present that you are accompanying a *practical* sportsman. The twenty-four full-page illustrations by various artists are highly finished and satisfactory. G. P. Putnam's Sons, of London and New York, are the publishers.

J. W. Arrowsmith, of Bristol, republish in a handy volume the series of papers that originally appeared in *Punch*, entitled *The Diary of a Nobody*, with the addition of many new chapters. The authors being George and Weedon Grossmith, the reader will find, as he might fairly expect to do, abundance of funny and lively materials wherewith to while away the hours. The illustrations by Weedon Grossmith are decidedly smart.

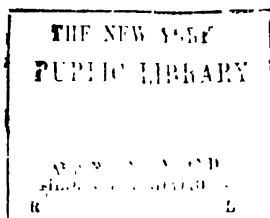
The same firm appeal to the noble army of cricketers with a small volume, written by Edmund B. V. Christian, entitled *At the Sign of the Wicket*, which is a series of essays in prose and verse upon (as the author rightly terms it) 'the glorious game.' As in the former book, some of these essays have appeared before in various journals, but as they will well bear reperusal, their collation, with additions, in book form will be welcomed by cricketers.

Major J. W. Malet's recent invention, *The Portable Tent-pole Rack*, undoubtedly supplies a long-felt want to 'campers out.' A metal band, which has four telescopic arms attached, is screwed to the tent-pole at any desired height, and can be used either for hanging purposes or to form a table, according to the position in which it is fixed. It can quickly be attached or detached, and when not in use occupies but a small space. Primarily intended for military purposes, it is obviously equally available for any other in which a tent is used. Boating and other sportsmen should note this useful item, which is supplied by The Military Equipment Stores Company, Pall Mall.

The latest addition to the popular Badminton Library (Longmans & Co.) consists of two volumes on *Big Game Shooting* in Africa, America, India, the Arctic regions, &c., and contains contributions from such well-known authorities as the late Sir Samuel Baker, Mr. Selous, Mr. F. J. Jackson, Mr. Clive Phillips Wolley, &c. That the Editors have been able to secure the co-operation of these gentlemen is a sufficient guarantee that the branches of sport they severally deal with are treated from the vantage-ground of the ripest experience, and sportsmen whose proclivities lie in this direction will, no doubt, find much that will be useful to them; while to those who regard these sports from the outside view of non-participants, the stories of daring and adventure, as well as the spirited illustrations, will prove more than interesting—indeed, quite fascinating.



MARSKER.
After G. Stubbs, R.A.



FORES'S

SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

MARSKE.

By 'PECKWATER.'

IN the third remove from the Darley Arabian we arrive at Marske (sometimes spelled Mask), sire Squirt, grandsire Bartlett's Childers, Marske's dam being daughter of Hutton's Blacklegs. In this short space the pure Eastern blood had been alloyed through two distinct infusions of unknown streams in the dam of Squirt, and no fewer than seven similar blanks appear in the pedigree of Marske's dam. So now we have to deal with a horse with many strains of English blood in his veins, showing an unmistakable departure from the system of breeding in Childers's day. Some persons never cease deploring this deviation from the pure Eastern blood, while others attribute to the outcrosses the establishment of our now unrivalled breed of thoroughbred horses, and argue that, if we had kept on breeding in strictly Eastern lines, we should have perpetuated a race of inbred gallowses, whose size and power would have been far below those of our own modern racehorses.

Before condemning the breed of English horses of the eighteenth century, it will be well to consider the records that remain to us of their performances and probable descent. If we were to judge from the writings of a certain class, it would be pronounced that the old English horse was a wretched underbred animal, without speed or any other quality to recommend him, whereas, we find that continuous efforts had been made by our kings and nobles to introduce sires, either Arabs or Barbs, to cross with their native mares. In the time of James the First,

Gervase Markham, a breeder of horses and an importer of Arabian blood, writes :—

‘What nation hath brought forth that horse which hath exceeded the English, when the best Barbarie that ever were in their prime, I saw them overrunne by a black hobbie at Salisbury, yet, that hobbie was more overrunne by a horse called Valentine, a plain bred English horse, both by sire and dam.’*

Barbary and Turkey stallions are recommended by Michael Barrett, who wrote in 1618. Then he adds, ‘but the cross with the English mare doth more exceed both Spanish genet, Irish hobby, and Arabian courser in toughness.’

The English mare is described by Cavendish, Marquis of Newcastle, in his work on horsemanship, in 1658, as being of good stature, with a small head, firm, thin crest, deep chest, flat legs, while the running horse had limbs more slender, joints more loose, and was not so short in the pasterns as the hunting horse. Indeed, it is asserted that between 1618 and 1700 ‘noblemen, gentlemen, and yeomen had founded on the stocks of English mares, and a few imported Oriental ones by aid of Barb, Persian, Turkish, and Arab sires, a breed of horses superior to either.’

Then the fact of Marshal Saxe, the victorious General at Fontenoy, having come over to England, in 1724, to buy horses, on which occasion, moreover, he paid a visit to Newmarket, proves that the fame of our English breed had already reached the Continent, so that, instead of decrying the infusion of so-called unknown blood in the pedigrees of our racers, we have good grounds for maintaining that it was through the native breeds, improved as they undoubtedly had been by Eastern sires, that we now possess a thoroughbred horse which no other nation has been able to surpass.

Having so far endeavoured to reconcile the blanks in the pedigree of Marske, with his undisputed excellence as a sire, we will proceed with his history, which is a remarkable one, illustrating, as it does, the vicissitudes of fortune some of our most noted sires have been exposed to.

There are numerous portraits of Marske extant, from which we are able to form a correct idea of this horse’s great power and quality. He was a beautiful deep brown in colour, and stood about fifteen hands high, with great substance and a grand figure.

* See Sydney’s *Book of the Horse*.

For the most part he impressed this rich colour on his descendants, which, as it will be seen, were propagated from mares of all sorts and sizes. Marske was so named by the Duke of Cumberland, after he came into his possession, from the village in Yorkshire, where the horse was bred. His breeder was John Hutton, Esq., of Marske, whose name appears frequently in old pedigrees as an extensive owner of blood stock. Marske's pedigree we have sketched already, and his full descent is to be found in either of the books we have before alluded to.

He was first known as the 'Squirt colt.' Then, the Duke of Cumberland, brother of George the Third, having taken a great fancy to him, persuaded his breeder, Mr. Hutton, to exchange him for a chestnut Arabian; thenceforward he received the name of Marske.

Marske was at once put into training, but his performances at Newmarket do not seem to have been of a very high class, for he started five times only, and received one forfeit; he certainly won the Jockey Club Plate over the Round Course at Newmarket, beating Pytho, Brilliant, and others; he also won a match for £300, over the B. C., this was in 1754, but in the next year he seems to have lost all form, and was beaten by Brilliant, Syphon, and Snap, and paid forfeit to Spectator; he was then withdrawn from the turf, and was used as a private stallion in the stud of H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland.

Here he is credited as sire of Eclipse, although a report was circulated, on the obscure authority of a groom of O'Kelly's, the subsequent owner of Eclipse, that Spiletta, the dam of Eclipse, had been covered by a horse named Shakespeare, as well as by Marske. But this, like other similar rumours, did not gain sufficient credit to vitiate Marske's title to the parentage of this famous horse, for in all pedigrees he appears as his undoubted sire.

After the death of the Duke of Cumberland, the whole stud of H.R.H. was sold, and Marske was disposed of for a few pounds to a farmer living in Dorsetshire, while Eclipse, then a yearling, was bought by Mr. Wildman, the sporting sheep salesman, for seventy-four guineas. While in the hands of the Dorsetshire farmer, Marske was allowed, in 1766, to cover country mares at the modest fee of half-a-guinea, and in some cases for five shillings each mare.

A writer in an old number of the *Sporting Magazine*, asserts that this was really the case, and that he had himself seen a

number of galloways by Marske out of New Forest mares, all dark brown like the sire, and particularly well shaped, and good goers.

But Mr. Wildman had found out the high merits of the young Eclipse, whom he had in training at Epsom, he accordingly set to work to find out the whereabouts of his reputed sire; this he soon succeeded in doing, and boldly offered the farmer twenty guineas for his 'worthless screw.'

'Tis nought, 'tis nought,' said the buyer, and so pleased was the countryman at receiving so handsome a bid, that he at once closed with it, and declared himself delighted to have found 'so good a chap to rid him of what he held to be a very bad bargain.'

No one seemed to place any faith in the report which a Mr. Lawrance set going as to the doubtfulness of the paternity of Eclipse, and the fortunes of Marske at once underwent a rapid transformation, thus: In 1767, we find him covering at Bistern, near Ringwood, Hants, at three guineas and five guineas; in 1769, at Gibbon's Grove, near Leatherhead, at five guineas; and in 1770, at ten guineas. Then his fee was raised to thirty guineas, such fame had he acquired owing to the size and quality of his produce in training, but more especially from the matchless performances of his invincible son, Eclipse.

Marske was now reputed to be the most valuable and the highest-bred stallion in the kingdom, so we note the Earl of Abingdon was induced to purchase him for a thousand guineas, sending him to his lordship's stud at Rycot, in Oxfordshire, where he covered, until his death in 1779, at one hundred guineas each mare, and one guinea the groom.

In one season, his lordship raised the covering fee to 200 guineas each mare, a charge which was unprecedented in those days.

Marske's value as a sire was soon made evident through the winnings of his sons and daughters, which in the course of twenty years amounted to £75,000, a sum which must have represented a vast number of races won. The most celebrated of his progeny were Eclipse, Shark, Pretender, Honest Kitt, Masquerade, Transit, Leviathan, Pontac, Hephestion, as reported in the *Sporting Magazine* of 1820.

Hyperion, a chestnut horse afterwards named Garrick, an own brother to Eclipse, got by Marske out of Spiletta, was sold at three years old to Mr. Tattersall for 160 guineas, but made no mark, either as a racer or at the stud, so the freaks and un-

certainties of horse breeding were as remarkable then as in our own so-called degenerate days.

We find three of Marske's sons named after their sire, but distinguished by the prefix of their breeders' names—viz., Haydon's Marske, Hutton's Young Marske, and Dowson's or Clayhall Marske.

PARTRIDGES IN CEYLON.

By J. E. S.



HERE are two kinds of partridges—properly so called—in Ceylon: the 'Grey partridge' and the 'Patena partridge,' or 'painted partridge' (*Fran-colinus pictus*). The latter bird is confined exclusively to the hill districts of the island. It is found on the *patenas*—large tracts of hilly ground, covered with rank 'Mana' grass and interspersed with belts of jungle—and is never seen in coveys. Usually a pair are flushed which will fly a short distance and pitch, and then are very difficult to flush a second time. They are handsome birds, rather smaller than the English bird, and very good eating, but on account of their comparative rarity can hardly be said to afford any sport worthy of the name of partridge-shooting.

The 'Grey partridge,' on the other hand, is very plentiful in parts of the island, and affords excellent sport. The chief haunts of 'Grey partridge' are in the North and North-western Provinces. They are scarcely known in any other part of Ceylon; they are *invariably* found in the bush jungle fringing the coast, and are never seen much more than a mile inland. He is a very handsome bird, with wings marked and shaped almost exactly like the English bird, black bars on the breast and bright red legs; the latter are rather clumsy and scaly, and not to be compared to the neat legs of his English brother, but they can take him over the ground at a tremendous pace. In running powers he is most likely *facile princeps* among partridges. The cock has spurs half an inch long, slightly up-curved, and sharp as needles, and in fighting they use them with terrible effect. For a long time I kept a number of these birds in an enclosure netted over, and, in spite of all precautions, the cocks would often get at each other and have sanguinary duels which often terminated fatally.

The flight of the bird is perhaps hardly as strong as the home bird in November, but they go off with a whirr and a rattle at a capital pace, and are very pretty shooting.

The season is about the same as in England. It is, however, little use beginning before October. By that time the rains ought to have come in the North and North-western Provinces, and the grassy plains, where the birds find their food, are in good order, and the birds are strong on the wing and in good condition.

The cream of partridge-shooting is to be had in November, December, and January. In these months golden plover arrive on the partridge grounds in great numbers, and a good sprinkling of snipe will often be met with, so that the bag of partridges is assisted and varied with other game.

The characteristic features of the North and North-western coasts are grassy plains, with belts of more or less light bush jungle scattered about, and here is the home of the partridges.

For putting the birds up, commend me to well-trained fox-terriers. These little dogs, if taught not to range too wide and to be obedient to whistle, are the shooter's best all-round auxiliaries for *low country* shooting. They are hardy, can stand the climate well, and bustle about briskly in light jungle. In default of terriers beaters must be employed, and, in fact, one ought always to have a couple of men to go into the bushes and beat, whether dogs are used or not. Often a covey of ten or twelve birds will be seen feeding on the grass outside a belt of jungle. They see you at a long distance, and with one consent run into the jungle. *Now* you ought to get on terms with them. You go up to the place as quickly as possible, and put your men and dogs in, and post yourself well forward. If you have luck, the birds will come out in ones and twos, and you will very likely get two or three brace out of the covey.

The 'Grey partridge' is a good bird for the table, although nothing like so good as the home bird ; but it might be said, in extenuation of this failing of his, that he cannot be 'hung' like the English bird, but has to be eaten fresh. Still, a young bird carefully roasted with a bit of bacon on his breast is very good eating. Of course an old cock is a very tough subject, and all that can be said of him is what the Scotch gamekeeper in *Punch* said of the old grouse—'a gran' bird to gie awa' to your freens.'

An adult partridge will not, as a rule, weigh as much as the home bird. I have occasionally killed old cocks weighing as

near as possible sixteen ounces, but this is exceptionally heavy ; from thirteen to fourteen ounces is *good* weight for a well-conditioned bird.

On two occasions only in the course of many years' shooting I have seen partridges pitch on trees. They are commonly supposed to do so as a natural thing, but I have only observed it twice. Once when shooting round the Puttalam lake (North-western Province) I noticed a bird which looked like a partridge sitting on the bough of a small tree, and on closer inspection saw that seven or eight partridges were sitting on the same limb all closely huddled together. It was the more curious as it was about 9 a.m. and the birds could not have been roosting ; had it been at dusk, it would not have been so surprising. I basely took a 'pot-shot' into the brown and knocked over four of them. This will sound awful to an English sportsman's ears, but abroad matters are governed by other rules than they are at home ; besides, I was young then, and did not properly realise the heinousness of the deed.

The very best grounds for partridges which I have ever known in Ceylon are about Puttalam and all up that part of the coast. Many and very pleasant are the recollections of good days I have had during the years I was stationed in that part of the island. On one occasion a planter from up country came down there for a week's holiday. I showed him my tame partridges ; he had never seen any before, and he was overjoyed at the prospect of making the acquaintance of birds so like the 'brown birds' of the old country. All his old memories of stubble and turnips revived within him.

'By Jove,' he exclaimed, 'what grand birds ! Do you get many of them about here ?'

'Just wait till to-morrow,' said I, 'and I think I can show you some.'

The next day we had a first-rate day's sport on one of my best grounds, which, luckily, had been very little shot over. My friend shot remarkably straight, and when at eleven o'clock we sat down under the shade of a tree to refresh ourselves with cold fowl and 'Bass' we laid out on the grass a good mixed bag of partridge, golden plover, and snipe, besides a few hares and jungle fowl. I never saw a man more pleased. He said, 'Well, I haven't had such a day's sport since I left Norfolk.'

A day's partridge-shooting in Ceylon offers a striking contrast in all its surroundings to the same sport among the turnips of

England, and I cannot illustrate this better than by endeavouring to describe a good day's sport from notes taken in my shooting diary at the time some few years ago.

Imagine a large salt-water lake, or, more correctly speaking, backwater of the sea, some thirty miles long and ranging from one and a half to six miles or thereabouts in breadth. This is known as Puttalam lake. All the partridge-shooting worth speaking of is to be had above the town of Puttalam.

It is 5 a.m., just before dawn on an October morning, and we are to cross the lake (not more than two miles wide where we are) to a place called Karativoe, where there are lots of partridges. Three of us leave my bungalow: my peon, Hamin, a Malay, and a very useful fellow; my little terrier, Judy, a game little creature and very keen with the gun; and myself with the fowling-piece. We walk to the jetty, not 300 yards from my bungalow, and there we get into a 'ballam,' or native canoe, which is all ready and waiting for us. The 'ballam' is manned by two Singhalese boatmen, who always accompany me on these expeditions, and who love the sport and are good beaters. There is a nice breeze, so we up sail and are off. We none of us talk very much; there is that about early morning in the East, particularly when on the water, which produces a pleasant feeling of laziness with a tendency to pensiveness. The terrier curls up comfortably at the bottom of the canoe, and the boatmen, with their cloths thrown over their shoulders to keep off the chill morning air, calmly chew their betel and gaze out over the lake. As we pass the shallows the grey mullet, alarmed by the 'ballam,' leap in dozens out of the water; a few early curlew flap across the lake, well out of shot, depend upon it, screaming hoarsely, and as dawn breaks a pair of white-headed fish eagles are seen wheeling grandly in circles above the lake looking for their prey.

Just before we touch land we hear the welcome call of the 'kawthari' (Tamil for partridge) ringing from the scrub which fringes the shore. It is a very peculiar cry, something like this:—'Chunk-a-chink chink; chunk-a-chink chink-chink,' uttered very rapidly. The 'ballam' is pulled up on the sand, the three men all get good sticks, and Judy is all alive, and we proceed to beat out the first bit of 'bush.' This produces three brace of partridges, and just at the end of it Judy gives two sharp 'yaps' and out slips a big hare, who is rolled over as he tries to cross the plain to a belt of jungle further on.

An old cock was marked down, in some high coarse stuff bearing a slight resemblance to heather growing near the shore, and we proceed to look after him. We tramp it through carefully, but we see nothing of our game, but at last Judy gets on his line and pokes him up behind us, where he has 'lain low' to allow us to pass. He makes a great noise getting up, and makes the best use of his wings to escape, but to no purpose, for he is cut down clean at forty yards and takes his place in the bag. There are plenty of birds, and they are well accounted for, and the bag begins to get heavy.

We work our way to a mangrove swamp, and here some dozen snipe are found, which get up with a 'scape, scape,' and give not too easy shots as they go through the bushes in the swamp. However, two and a half couple are brought to bag. We finish up the morning's shoot by trying two or three little islands in the lake, to which we have to sail in the 'ballam.'

These islands are not more than from three to five acres in area, and are covered with bushy jungle and mangrove swamp, but they invariably hold partridge and snipe.

It is curious how the birds manage for water on these islands, for I have never been able to find any fresh water on them. It is unlikely that the birds fly to the mainland, often three-quarters of a mile distant, for partridges, unless hard pressed, do not like so long a flight over water. In the wet monsoon there would, of course, be plenty of water for them at every rainfall, but at other times it is likely that they drink the dew on the grass in the early morning.

With the 'islands' beat' our morning's sport is concluded at half-past eleven. The bag is thirteen and a half brace of partridges, one jungle hen, three hares, one curlew, one whimbrel, five snipe, and nine golden plover, and as we *row* home—for the wind will not help us going back—we consider that we have had a very good morning's sport.

There is good partridge-shooting in the Northern Province, particularly at Manaar and Elephant Pass. At the latter place vast assemblies of wild fowl will be found in the lagoons about November and December, but it is almost impossible to get at them. A punt gun might possibly be effective, but as yet no punt-gunning has been tried in Ceylon.

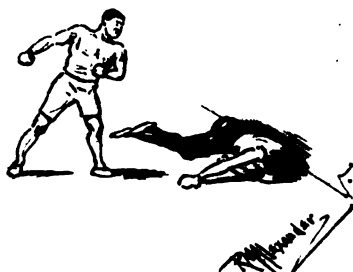
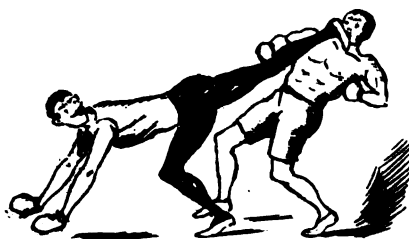
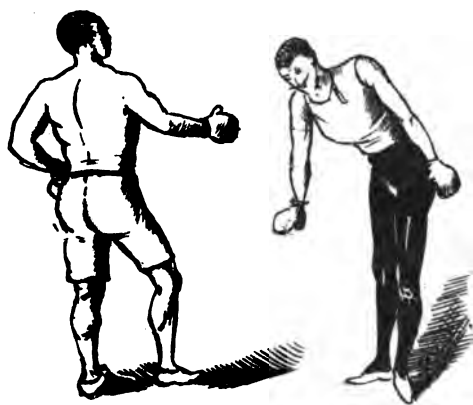
No. 7 is perhaps the best shot for partridge and jungle fowl, which are generally flushed at short range, and is excellent for snipe and plover; but it is always advisable to have heavier shot,

such as No. 5 or 4, in one barrel, for in beating 'scrub' for partridges and hares you not unfrequently come across a wild cat or spotted deer, and a charge of No. 4, if well directed, will stop these animals up to twenty yards, or even a little further. But to shoot at a deer with even this size of shot at any such distance as forty or fifty yards would be simply cruelty, for no reasonable hope could be entertained of bagging it.

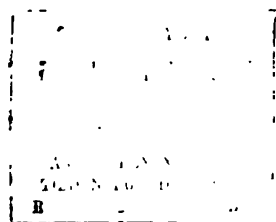
'QUEER BOXING REMINISCENCES.'

By 'SCRAMO.'

YES, I have seen one or two queer events in the boxing line. How time makes the running nowadays! Somehow, things seem to come and go much faster than they used to do, and, although I still feel young, it is nearly a quarter of a century since I witnessed the most amusing show, I suppose, that was ever given in the way of a contest between two exponents of the noble art of self defence—one an Englishman, and the other a Frenchman. The match was arranged by a well-known amateur boxer, and took place in a small town in France, in the rooms of an old Frenchman who gave lessons in fencing, &c. Only about a dozen spectators were invited, and I happened to be one of the favoured few. The Englishman was one of the stars of his profession, and a real tough bruiser, and had never seen the French style of boxing, *viz.* 'la savate.' The Frenchman was one of the leading professors of the art, and had never met an Englishman. So we looked forward to seeing something that would amuse us. We were not disappointed. They both wore gloves, the weight of which I do not remember, and canvas shoes. There was no ring, so they had the whole room to manœuvre in. The spectators stood round the corners. I will call the Englishman 'Tom,' and the Frenchman 'Alphonse.' Tom appeared in the orthodox rig, breeches and socks, and stripped to the waist. Alphonse turned out in a white jersey and black tights. He was a great contrast to the broad-shouldered, bullet-headed Englishman, being nearly a head taller, with extraordinarily long legs, and a wild and hungry look about the eyes. They advanced to the middle of the room, and Tom held out his hand



Tom and Alphonse.



in the usual manner, but was received with a low and courteous bow from Alphonse.

Tom led off by making a feint at the face of Alphonse, who parried it, and landed Tom a smart kick on the side of the head with his right foot, followed immediately by another kick on the other side of the head with his left!

Tom's look of astonishment was a picture, he tried in vain to get in at Alphonse, who seemed to flutter about more like a butterfly, or daddy-long-legs, than anything else; he tried to catch hold of the feet that kept playing about his head, but without avail, the head that he wanted to go for was *never* where the head should be, according to Tom, so practically, he had nothing to tackle, except an elongated pair of understandings that seemed to work on springs and on which he could make little or no impression. I forget how many rounds were fought; any how, we were all convulsed with laughter till the last round, in the middle of which Alphonse threw himself back on his hands and shot out with his left foot, the sole of which was planted with terrific force full into Tom's face, who staggered back nearly the whole length of the room, but he recovered himself, and, with a wicked look, made a rush at Alphonse, and drove him into one of the corners, where he could not use his legs, and landed him one he will never forget, right under the jaw, which almost lifted him off his legs, and his head went with a crash against the wall, and poor Alphonse dropped senseless to the floor. Tom stood over him and muttered, 'You d—d Froggy, I'll teach you to play football with *my* head!'

It was some time before Alphonse came round, in fact, we thought at first that he was killed; however, with plenty of cold water poured over his head, and a fair quantity of cognac poured down his throat, he at last recovered, and it is needless to say, had had quite enough of it. I would go a long way to witness such another show, the extraordinary agility of the Frenchman was most astonishing, and there is no doubt an adept at 'la savate' is no mean adversary for an ordinary boxer to tackle.

Some years ago, I went for a change of air to a small town on the coast of Devonshire, and made many acquaintances at the county club, and amongst them was Bob Bradley, about as smart a man with his fists as you could come across in a long day's walk. He stood about 5 ft. 9 in., and weighed about

11 stone 10 lbs., had the pluck of a bull, and would go for any one twice his weight. His great delight was to patronise the boxing booths that one sees at every fair, and put on the gloves with the ruffianly-looking proprietors. His skill generally astonished them not a little, and, after knocking all he could out of them, would reward them handsomely.

'I say, old man,' he said to me one day, 'I hear there is a big fighting nigger at the fair at Paldon, and I want to have a go in at him, will you come with me to-morrow?'

'All right,' I replied, 'and don't you think we had better make up a party, in case it turns out a bit rowdy?'

It soon got abroad that Bob was going to tackle the big nigger, so we had no lack of friends to accompany us.

The following morning we took a boat, and sailed over to Paldon, and had no difficulty in finding the boxing booth, amongst the shrieking merry-go-rounds, shooting galleries, tents containing fat women, skeleton men, Irish Zulus, &c.

'Walk in, gentlemen, and see the champion fighter of the world, Nigger Joss, in a bout with the Devonshire Chicken, performance about to begin, front seats fourpence, tuppence to stand; walk in, gentlemen, and see the noble h'art o' self-defence!'

We paid our money, and found ourselves inside a stuffy tent, with a square of planks arranged round a twelve-foot ring; the place was thronged with fishermen, yokels, soldiers, and sailors. In a short time Nigger Joss and the Devonshire Chicken entered the ring, attended by their seconds, and soon got to work, after being introduced by Mr. Dick Trainer, the proprietor, a young fellow of about 24, and who looked himself every inch a thoroughly trained athlete. They sparred three rounds with a great deal of show and little execution, and at the finish Nigger Joss exclaimed, in a loud and bumptious voice, that he had beaten every one that had ever stood up to him, and offered to fight any man in the world. Although the Nigger weighed something like 14 stone, Bob Bradley jumped into the ring and said he would like to have a turn with him. Joss showed all his ivories with a broad grin, and asked Bob if he wanted to be eaten! Bob answered nothing, but quietly put on the mittens and set to work, and, although he had the best of it as far as hits could count, he could make no impression whatever on his dusky opponent, whose weight, of course, told; and after four rounds, fought in the most plucky manner by Bob, which

brought forth thunders of applause and yells of 'Go it, little 'un !' we persuaded him to give it up, much against his will.

After we came out of the booth we took ourselves off to the nearest hotel, where Bob had a wash down outwardly, while we did it inwardly and talked over the event.

'I would give something to see that Nigger licked,' I remarked.

'I'll tell you what we will do,' replied Bob, coming into the room at that moment and hearing my observation. 'I have a pal up in Birmingham who is well in with the fighting fraternity there, and if you fellows like to make up a purse I'll wire to him to-night to send down the best bruiser he can get hold of. The fair moves off to Crossmouth to-morrow, and we will tell Dick Trainer, the proprietor, that we have got a friend who we think could lick his Nigger, and arrange a quiet little business after the fair is practically over. I know the police inspector, and can put him all straight.'

Splendid idea we all thought, and at once agreed to share the expenses. That afternoon the telegram was sent off, and a few hours after Bob received the following reply:—'Can't get the man I wanted, but one I don't know, said to be what you require, will start to-night.'

Next morning Bob met us at the Club, and showed us a letter he had just received from his friend by the morning post, saying he knew nothing about the man that was coming, but was told he was a bruiser and could stand any amount of punishment, &c., and he would arrive that afternoon and report himself. About 3 o'clock Bob rushed into my room, saying,—

'He's turned up all right, and is outside—as ugly a looking devil as you can wish to see. Shall I bring him up?'

'All right,' I replied.

So Bob put his head out of the window, and told our Birmingham pet to walk up. He certainly was a beauty—the bridge of his nose broken, all his front teeth gone, and a suspiciously beery look about the eyes. How on earth can we pass him off as a friend of ours? I thought; anybody could tell what he is. Happy thought, I will rig him out in a straw hat, striped jacket and flannels, and get him shaved and fixed up as well as possible by the barber.

Bob approved of this, and in a short time this famous prize-fighter hardly knew himself. We walked him about the fair, and took him out in a boat to watch the regatta that was going

on, and put him as much *en evidence* as possible, so that the men of the booth should have no suspicion that he was not a pal of ours.

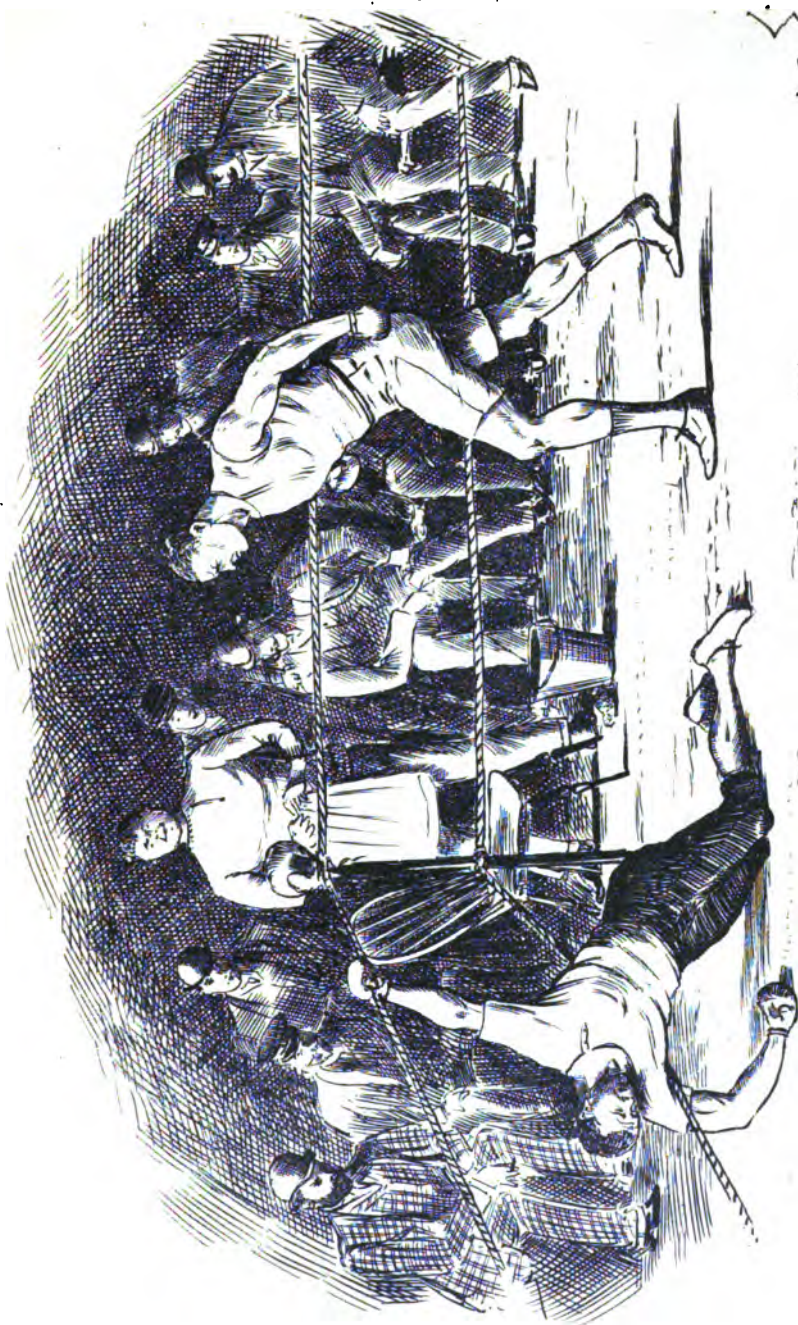
He talked about his wonderful achievements in the ring, and said he had heard of Nigger Joss, and had no doubt he could soon give him the 'knock out,' mentioning at the same time he would like to be paid before the fight, as he wanted to go off immediately after to see some friends of his. So we agreed to pay him in the booth before they went in the ring.

About half-past ten that night a party of fourteen sportsmen were seen stumbling over the numerous ropes that formed a regular network over the ground on which the fair was being held, they entered the boxing booth quietly, and were received by Dick Trainer, who said he was exceedingly sorry, but Joss had taken too much the night before and had fallen over the sea wall and had bruised one of his arms and side badly, and could not possibly come to the scratch.

'Bunkum!' Bob Bradley answered; 'he funks it, I thought he was a cur.'

'Indeed I don't, Sir!' from a voice in the corner, as Nigger Joss rose up with difficulty from a pile of dirty canvas on which he had been lying. 'I've never been called a funk before, and you can see for yourselves, gentlemen, I'm not in a fit state to fight.'

He took off his coat and showed us his arm, and at the same time actually burst into tears—this is a fact. He certainly seemed badly hurt, and had evidently been drinking heavily. We were, indeed, disappointed, and told Dick Trainer that our friend, whom we introduced, had been looking forward to killing the Nigger, and would gladly put the gloves on with the best man he could produce. Dick bowed, and then looked at our Birmingham pal, and a smile lit up his countenance. He went up to Bob and whispered, 'I see your little game, Sir; you thought you were going to play off on old Joss. That *thing's* no more a pal o' yours than I am. He comes from Birmingham, and is one of the biggest curs that ever wore the mittens; he can stand a bit of punishing, and that's all, and makes a living out of it. If you gentlemen will make it worth my while, I'll give him a lesson myself he won't forget in a hurry.' We were furious at being done like this after all the trouble and expense we had incurred, to say nothing of walking this ruffian about arm in arm, calling him 'Old Chappie,' &c. So we told Trainer



'Where he hung like a rag on a clothes line!'

B

if he did what he said he could do we would give him a fiver. To this he agreed.

Our Birmingham pal had already received his fee and travelling expenses, bad luck to him ; and when he refused to box with 3 oz. gloves the epithets we hurled at him made the short bristles he had on his head start out. Trainer went up to him and said if he didn't put them on he would go for him without gloves, and risk the chance of the police turning up. He saw himself cornered, so was at last obliged to give in, and pulled on the gloves with a sulky scowl. They set to work in earnest, and it was soon evident what the result would be. In two rounds Dick Trainer gave his adversary such a dressing down that he was simply crumpled up, and at last was knocked over the ropes, where he hung like a rag on a clothes-line, and had to be carried to the back of the tent almost a corpse. Bob Bradley was wild at not having had a go in at him himself, as he would have liked to have had the pleasure of slaughtering him. That is the way we treated our pal from Birmingham.

What a ridiculous fuss some people make about a glove fight. Not many months ago a boxing competition was advertised to take place in the theatre of a country town in the South of England, and a cup offered for competition for local amateurs. It is needless to say the house was packed from floor to ceiling, although it was the first venture of anything of the kind that had taken place in this town. Everything was well conducted, there was no rowdiness, and the majority enjoyed the show ; but, of course, amongst the many were a few who deserved the designation of 'old women' rather than men, who thought it disgraceful, and resolved that 'they would never attend another exhibition like it.' Who wants them ? If they have weak stomachs let them stop at home and knit stockings. The result of the entertainment was that a match was arranged between the local champion and an amateur from London. The show was supposed to be semi-private, and took place in the hall of a neighbouring village—and a fine exhibition it was, although the event did not last long. In the fifth round the local man was knocked out, and the police came in to clear the room. I happened to be sitting near the ropes with one of the magistrates of the district, who had never attended a glove fight before. He said to me, 'What's to be done ?' I replied, 'I mean to sit where I am and insist on the next event going on,' which was a fifteen-

round sparring exhibition by two celebrities from London ; 'nothing has happened in contravention of the law, and the police cannot interfere.' This was eventually explained to the ignorant inspector, and the performance allowed to continue without further interruption. Many of the spectators had made a bolt for the doors, frightened, I suppose, at running the risk of their names appearing in the papers !

However, the papers did take it up, the Local Board took it up, the County Council took it up, the parsons and all the old women in the place took it up—'disgraceful proceedings,' 'bloodthirsty prize fight,' 'brutal exhibition,' was heard and read on all sides. 'To think that such a degrading and diabolical exhibition should take place in our town ; where are the police ?' &c. And didn't my friend the magistrate catch it, too !

All I can say is, that one sees far more bloodthirsty and disgraceful scenes on the field of a football match. On more than one occasion, in years gone by, have I myself been carried off the football field on a hurdle, hacked to pieces, eyes bunged up, and scarcely a breath left in me even to ask for a glass of water—and yet these people, who object to an ordinary glove contest, will look on and gloat over this. They are beneath contempt.

THE ASCOT HEATH MYSTERY.

By RICHARD RUSSELL.

PROLOGUE.



ON a Wednesday in the month of June, 1871, the following paragraph appeared in the first edition of the evening papers:—

'Startling discovery ! a dead body found in a cab in front of a gentleman's house at Acton. Some letters in the pockets of the deceased have disclosed the fact that it is the body of Mr. George Hatherton, a gentleman who was well known in sporting circles.'

The morning after this paragraph had appeared, a lady, dressed all in black, and her face closely veiled, called at the police office, Scotland Yard, and requested to see the superintendent. As she declined to state the nature of her business to any other person, she was at once conducted to Mr. William-

son's office. The lady appeared to be sorely stricken with grief, and her voice was painfully tremulous.

'I have come,' she said, 'respecting the mysterious affair at Acton.'

Mr. Williamson was all attention in a moment.

'Pray do not imagine,' said the lady, 'that I have any particulars to give you, as I come here for the sole purpose of gaining information; and it is not in my power to assist you in your investigations. I wish to engage the services of a clever officer, so that he may unravel the mystery and learn what strange circumstances have led to the death of George Hatherton, and why his body was driven to that house at Acton. I wish the officer to work solely for me, and to inform me of all he learns, before the particulars find their way to the public papers; but it is not my wish to impede or retard the hand of justice in any way whatever.'

'May I ask to whom I have the honour of speaking?' said Mr. Williamson.

'Certainly,' replied the lady, throwing back her veil from her face, 'I am known to the world as Isabel Gascoigne!'

'Miss Gascoigne, the actress!' cried Williamson; 'there would have been no need to ask your name if I could have seen your face.'

Miss Gascoigne smiled, in spite of her grief.

'George Hatherton,' she continued to say, 'was really my brother, and I tell you this in confidence. There was an estrangement between us, and he went his way, and I went mine. We seldom met, and never spoke. I hoped that some day our grievances would die out, and be forgotten, but now I read of his strange death in the papers, and fear that he may have been subjected to foul play, because I know that at times he had very large sums of money in his possession.'

The mortal remains of George Hatherton were laid in their final resting-place in Kensal Green Cemetery, and the only mourner at the grave-side was Isabel Gascoigne—she who had avowed herself to be the dead man's sister; and it seemed as if there existed no other relative or friend to pay the last tribute of respect to the dead man.

CHAPTER I.

WEDNESDAY, in the Ascot race week, June 1871. The betting on the Royal Hunt Cup had already been exceedingly.

heavy. Sir F. J. was the owner of a prominent favourite, and Sir F. J. was one of a *coterie* that numbered amongst its members some of the greatest speculators of the day, men who believed in the luck of Sir F. J.'s stable, and followed the young baronet's lead with blindfold fidelity.

To observant men, not addicted to the royal pastime of the turf, it must seem somewhat strange that shrewd and clever men should give their minds to horse-racing. A man may be the finest judge of handicapping living, and know the capabilities of every horse entered for some particular race; and he may have the best reasons for thinking that his own horse has seven pounds advantage of the best in the race; and yet by an oversight, or some unlooked for contingency, he will find himself beaten at last.

Leaving roguery and chicanery out of the question, no man can say for certain that his horse will win. The race for the Royal Hunt Cup in question is a curious exemplification of this argument.

Sir F. J. owned one of the handsomest and best bred horses in the race: *Historian*, by *Stockwell*—dam by *Gameboy*, 4 years old, 6st. 10 lbs. Sir F. J. regarded the horse's victory as a certainty; while his trainer, who was shrewdness personified, thought *Historian's* winning was a foregone conclusion; and yet when the day of the race came, they were actually unprovided with a jockey.

There was every indication of many horses starting; and the clever light-weight jockeys appeared to be all engaged. In this emergency Sir F. J. made application to a friend for the loan of his jockey, when the friend at once demanded fifty guineas for the loan of the lad.

'No,' replied Sir F. J.; 'I feel certain that *Historian* can beat your horse *Attaché*; therefore, if I were to give you fifty guineas, it would be tantamount to throwing that sum away!'

At last Sir F. J. succeeded in obtaining the services of a jockey, one as competent and trustworthy as any who rode in the race.

Now mark the sequel: the friend's horse, *Attaché*, won the race, beating *Historian*, after a good race, by a neck only!

If Sir F. J. had agreed to give the fifty guineas demanded for the loan of the jockey who afterwards rode *Attaché*, that horse would not have started; consequently *Historian* would have won the race.

CHAPTER II.

HARVEY STANCOMB came of a good family, was a gentlemanly fellow, good-looking, and a desperate gambler, and he backed Historian in a spirit of sheer desperation. In reality he had staked his own life on the event of Historian winning; for that horse's success had become a question of life or death to Harvey Stancomb. If Historian should win, Harvey Stancomb would then be a rich man; but, if Historian should lose, he could see but one way out of the difficulties with which he would be environed—namely, to blow out his own brains; and for that dreadful contingency he was fully prepared, as he carried a loaded revolver in a secret pocket of his coat. He was thus gambling with his own life. He was reduced to his last sovereign, and he had likewise exhausted all means of raising money, for the usurers, both east and west of Charing Cross, knew him too well, and had closed their books against him; and this desperate plunge on Historian was his final throw for fortune. After this he would be made or marred for ever; therefore this desperate effort, as before said, meant life or death—not simply win or lose, but actually life or death.

Totally unlike Harvey Stancomb, was George Hatherton in his mode of betting.

All Hatherton's transactions were based on the ready-money system, and he neither gave, nor asked for, credit. He would back a horse for 500*l.* or 1000*l.*, and stake the money at the time of making the bet. Therefore, when he won, he would, of course, receive the amount of his winnings, together with the sum staked, immediately after the race was over.

On this day he had no fancy whatever for the favourite, Historian, but backed Attaché, against which horse the bookmakers laid 20 to 1. Hatherton staked 500*l.* on Attaché, and calmly awaited the result of the race.

Attaché won; and George Hatherton received 10,500*l.* from the bookmakers. He experienced no difficulty whatever in collecting this large sum, as he was always careful to bet only with the most substantial of the fraternity.

When he came into the ring that morning he had one thousand pounds, in Bank of England notes, in his pocket, and that sum was now increased to eleven thousand!

Harvey Stancomb had lost over this race, the Royal Hunt.

Cup, and the penalty of DEATH he resolved to pay. He now walked out of the ring, slowly and moodily, and with head bowed low he left the heath, and sauntered into the village of Sunningdale, where he rested for an hour at a roadside inn, and then proceeded on foot towards Egham, where he had hired apartments for the week, as he much disliked travelling to and fro by train, between London and Ascot, each day. On his way down in the morning he had observed a fir plantation, which he then thought presented a very dismal appearance.

‘Those black pines,’ thought he, ‘are only suitable for the outskirts of a churchyard, or the windy sides of a cemetery. A man might put an end to his life in that plantation, and his body lie there unnoticed till nothing but his skeleton was left, and so defy recognition.’ Such were Stancomb’s hopeful thoughts as he passed the black pines in the morning, and now, as he walked in the shade of the trees, the thoughts of the morning recurred to his mind.

A narrow lane from the main road ran down by the side of the plantation, and into this lane Stancomb now turned, walking close to the edge, as if not wishing to be seen. He had not gone far ere he espied a wooden shed in the plantation, and he immediately clambered over a gate, and stood there alone, surrounded by the dark and dolorously moaning pines. The place was silent, weird, and dreary, and, coming upon him so soon after the clamour of the betting ring, the contrast was most depressing.

It was now dusk, and it was only at intervals that he could hear the rumbling of vehicles in the main road, which was quite half a mile off. He was by this time tired and weary, so he determined to rest for an hour or two inside the wooden shed, and when black night came he would creep forth, and, like a ghost, wander amongst the dirge-moaning pine trees, and, with the barrel of the revolver pointed to his forehead, all would soon be over! With trembling fingers he opened the door of the shed, and noiselessly went inside.

Over the shed was a loft, to reach which it was necessary to ascend by cross pieces of wood that were nailed between the battens on the wall. Stancomb clambered into the loft, and laid down on some loose hay, and then he felt safe from all interference; therefore he determined to rest until darkness came over the land.

CHAPTER III.

WE must now return to George Hatherton. As already stated, he had won 10,000*l.* over the race for the Royal Hunt Cup, and having won that sum he felt content, and determined to bet no more during that day, fearing lest the smiles of the fickle goddess should desert him, and his winnings be lost. He informed his friend, Frederick Charlton, of his good luck, and they walked from the ring, arm in arm together, to the hotel on the Heath, where they dined, and drank freely of port and champagne. The dinner, and their long talk afterwards, occupied several hours, and it was late when they left the hotel.

Charlton was driven down to Ascot in the morning from his house near Acton in a hansom cab; and now, after walking a hundred yards or so from the hotel, he and Hatherton were met by the same cab and driver. It was with much difficulty that Charlton managed to get Hatherton into the cab, and when the latter sank on to his seat he at once relapsed into a lethargic stupor, and Charlton sat down by his side; and in that manner they were driven off the Heath. The driver at first proceeded slowly in the direction of Windsor, but he soon turned into a road on his right, skirting the park, and which led him direct into the main road for Egham. The man drove slowly, and it was nearly eleven o'clock at night when the cab entered a by-road, and stopped opposite a wooden shed in a large fir plantation. Charlton alighted, opened the gate, when the cab was immediately driven into the plantation, and placed, together with the horse, behind the wooden shed. Charlton and the driver now carried Hatherton into the shed, and laid him down full length upon the floor. Charlton fetched one of the lamps from the cab and placed it against the wall of the shed, from which position it cast a bright light straight across the floor, its lurid gleams falling upon the three men; but its rays did not ascend, consequently the upper part of the shed remained in darkness.

Harvey Stancomb, still in the loft, quiet and unseen, watched the actions of the men below. Charlton took a roll of bank-notes from the inside pocket of Hatherton's waistcoat, the notes varied in value from five pounds to a hundred each. The notes were next divided into two lots, each lot representing 5500*l.* Charlton put one lot into his own pocket and the cabman appropriated the other. And there, up above in the loft, lay

Harvey Stancomb, quiet, motionless, but intently watching, and in his breast pocket was a loaded revolver. Charlton now took a small bottle from his waistcoat pocket, withdrew the stopper, and applied the open neck of the bottle to the lips and nostrils of George Hatherton.

‘Dead?’ inquired the cabman, in a whisper, of Charlton.

‘Yes; dead for evermore!’ responded Charlton.

Presumably Charlton and the cabman had some preconcerted plan for the disposal of the body of George Hatherton, but whatever the plan may have been can now never be known.

Harvey Stancomb had witnessed all that had taken place; had watched the division of the bank-notes; and in his heart had cursed Charlton and the cabman, the two accomplices in murder and robbery. He had come there for the purpose of committing self-murder, simply because his own life was become unbearable; but he had witnessed a terrible tragedy, and Charlton and the cabman had secured 11,000*l.* between them! ‘Would it be a crime if he were to shoot those two villains dead?’ he asked himself. ‘No; a thousand times no!’ came the reply, as his hand grasped the revolver. Two sharp reports followed in quick succession, and each bullet had found its billet as Charlton and the cabman fell dead in silent companionship with George Hatherton; and Harvey Stancomb, up there in the loft, remained motionless for some few minutes, wondering whether the reports of the revolver had been heard by any person passing down the lane by the side of the plantation. Not a sound reached his ears; not a footfall could be heard; therefore he descended from the loft, took all the bank-notes from each man’s pocket, and carefully placed them in a secret pocket of his own. His next proceeding was to put the cabman’s light overcoat, which had been thrown aside, on to his own back, and to fasten the licence badge on to his own person. Then he sought for the horse and cab, both of which were safe outside behind the shed. He carried the body of George Hatherton from the shed, and put it into the cab, thrusting it backward, so that it appeared to be leaning in one corner. After that he extinguished the light, and placed the lamp in its socket on the cab, pulled down the glass frame, led the horse into the lane, mounted the driver’s seat, and drove away from the dark pine wood slowly and steadily.

He had recognised Charlton, and knew that his home was at Woodbine Cottage, near Acton, as he had been there more than

once with a friend. He continued to drive slowly, and passed through Egham, Staines, Hounslow, and Isleworth, keeping on the road for London till near Kew Bridge; and then he turned up Gunnersbury Lane, which led him into the middle of Acton. From thence he quickly found his way to Woodbine Cottage; in front of which he divested himself of the cabman's coat and badge, rolled them up together and placed them upon the driver's seat. He now hurried away, leaving the cab, with its silent occupant, on the broad path in front of the door of the house. He took a circuitous route for the Uxbridge Road, where he fortunately met an empty cab, in which he was driven to his rooms in Bentinck Street, Manchester Square. He opened the door of the house with his latch-key, and quietly crept upstairs to his bedroom, feeling weary, worn, and almost helpless, and sank upon the bed in a state of semi-consciousness, and so remained for many hours.

CHAPTER IV.

WE will now return to the shed in the dark pine wood, where still lay the bodies of Charlton and the cabman. The bodies remained there unperceived and undisturbed until the Saturday night came. On this night, between the hours of eleven and twelve, two men silently approached the shed; and the stealthy manner in which they glided over the ground was more like that of ghosts or shadows from another world, while going their nocturnal rounds, than the movements of corporeal human beings. But the hour of these two men was well chosen, and they knew what they were about. At the far end of the pine wood was a rabbit warren, and the steward of the estate, likewise the gamekeeper, were known by sight to these prowlers, and had been seen by them at Ascot Races during the week.

The races terminated on the Friday afternoon, and when Saturday morning dawned all vagrants, such as gipsies, card-sellers, and cadgers, were bound to clear from off the Heath; consequently it was not at all probable that respectable persons, such as stewards or gamekeepers, would be abroad at that late hour of the Saturday night. Moreover, these two prowlers were endowed with the keen sight of birds of prey, and their sense of hearing was also preternaturally sharp, as the faintest sounds were audible to their ears; and any object moving, no matter how dimly limned, could be seen by them; and they would drop down instantly full length in a ditch, or behind a bush or a clump of furze.

Their names were Jim and Joel, and they were true-bred gipsies. Their tents, with their women-folk and children, had been pitched for the night on an out-of-the-way corner of Chobham Common, while Jim and Joel were after two or three rabbits, to boil down for their and their wives' and children's Sunday dinner. They had been close to the warren, and had carefully set their snares, and were now intent on having an hour's rest in the wooden shed. Should they be discovered, which they did not think was at all likely, their plea would be that they were only two poor moneyless gipsies on the tramp, and no kind-hearted gentleman could begrudge them an hour's rest in the empty shed! Jim and Joel by nature were cautious men; also, like all members of old and noted families, they were most exclusive and particular in regard to the persons with whom they associated; therefore they felt anxious, before lying down, to ascertain whether the shed was unoccupied or not.

They gently lifted the latch and noiselessly went inside, and then Jim produced a short piece of candle from the bottom of a capacious pocket of his jacket, while Joel ignited a match. Jim held the lighted piece of candle high above his head, so that he might make a careful survey of the shed; when the sight of both men fell upon the bodies of Charlton and the cabman. With quick perception the gipsies saw at a glance that both the bodies, which were lying side by side on the floor of the shed, were those of dead men; consequently there was no cause for alarm, as danger to such men as they always came from the living only! The gipsies next turned their attention to the pockets of the two dead bodies, and by the flickering and feeble light of the piece of candle Jim espied a gold chain projecting from Charlton's waistcoat pocket, and at the end of the chain he found a watch.

Joel now put his open hand on Charlton's forehead.

'He is cold—as cold as death!' remarked Joel.

After that, Jim put his hand on the cabman's forehead, and made the same remark.

Jim thought the bodies must have lain there for two or three days; but how they came to be there was a mystery, which he would not attempt to solve; but he and Joel decided to take charge of the gold watch and chain, as they considered it would be sheer folly to leave those valuable articles for the next person who might happen to come to the shed.

Jim took the red cotton neckerchief from his own neck, spread it open upon the floor, and placed Charlton's watch and chain upon it. In Charlton's pockets they also found 11*l.* 6*s.* 4*d.*, which they put with the watch and chain, and then turned their attention to the cabman's body, on which they found a silver watch and chain and 1*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.* in money. The watches, chains, and money were all rolled up together in Jim's red cotton neckerchief, and the valuable little bundle was placed in a corner of the shed, and covered over with loose hay. In a corner of the shed stood several long spades and pickaxes, such as are used for draining purposes. Jim and Joel, after a short consultation, determined to bury the two dead bodies in the plantation.

'That,' argued Jim, 'is the surest way to prevent inquiry being made for the things, of which we have taken possession. If the bodies are never found, no effort will be made to trace the watches and chains which once belonged to these men.'

In the plantation, and within thirty or forty yards of the shed, was an old sawpit, with a grass-grown mound of earth by its side, and not far from the old pit stood a large stack of faggots. The cabman's body was the first to be laid in the bottom of the pit, and then Charlton's, both lying close together and fitting tightly. And then, with two of the spades from the shed, the mound of earth was thrown over the bodies till the pit was filled in level with the surface of the ground. To make doubly sure, so as to leave no traces of their handiwork, Jim and Joel removed the stack of faggots and placed it over the unhallowed grave which they had chosen for the bodies of the two dead men.

Not a word was spoken by either of the gipsies. Joel followed Jim's lead all throughout, and, as they were two strong, wiry men, the work was accomplished in a very short space of time. They now returned the spades to the shed, and took possession of their 'property,' as Jim grimly designated the bundle which contained the watches, chains, and money. They did not wait to examine their wire snares, but hurried off to their tents, on the corner of Chobham Common; and their wives and children managed to do without boiled rabbit for their dinner on the Sunday; but before that Sunday evening came the gipsies were encamped on the outskirts of the pleasant village of Hartley Row, in Hampshire, happy and free, with their dark-eyed wives sitting on the greensward by their side, and their broods of swarthy children playing around them.

CHAPTER V.

A YEAR has passed away, and mundane affairs have so far prospered with Harvey Stancomb that he is now regarded as a fairly rich man. He had long been one of Isabel Gascoigne's most ardent admirers, and she had at last consented to become his wife, and he was hopefully looking forward to many years of peaceful love and happiness in her companionship. On her part, it must be acknowledged that she looked upon Harvey Stancomb with more favour than she had ever bestowed upon any other suitor, and she felt no misgivings in regard to her future happiness. Harvey had waited for her patiently, and was always staunch in his allegiance against many opposing obstacles; and he had promised to discard the allurements of the betting ring and card table, and she placed implicit faith in his word, because she herself could perceive that he was grown weary of the gay and fashionable world.

The following extract is copied from the *Daily Telegraph*, for a date in June, 1872 :—

‘The Ascot Race week this year was chiefly memorable for the revelation brought to light respecting the fate of two men, one of whom had been well known on the Turf, and both of whom have been missing, entirely lost to sight, ever since the Royal Hunt Cup day in last year. A mystery has enshrouded the disappearance of these two men, which all the efforts of their most intimate friends have failed to elucidate—a cabman named White, and a man whose figure was well known on every racecourse in England, and whose name was Frederick Charlton. Both these men were seen at Ascot Races on the Wednesday of last year, but from that day till now no trace of either man could be found. At first no particular importance was attached to the non-appearance of these men in their accustomed haunts, but as time went on their continued absence gave rise to many surmises as to their probable fate. On the morning of Wednesday last the remains of two human bodies were discovered in a remote spot in a large fir plantation, situated three or four miles eastward of Ascot Heath, and it is now supposed that these remains are those of White and Charlton. This supposition is considerably strengthened by the fact that with the remains was found a leather pocket-book containing some papers which formerly belonged to Frederick Charlton; a knife has also been found, with the name of Isaac White engraved on a small silver plate which is on its handle.’

In the evening of the day on which the foregoing particulars appeared in the public papers there was a dinner party at

Colonel Denby Wyeford's house, to which Harvey Stancomb and Isabel Gascoigne were invited. A dinner party at Denby Wyeford's meant card-playing for heavy stakes afterwards; but, to the unbounded astonishment of the other guests, Harvey Stancomb resolutely refused to play at any one game of cards, and his refusal induced the men to regard him with wonder. The Colonel thought him a fool, and attributed his strange conduct to softening of the brain.

'Take holy orders at once, Stancomb!' advised one man.

'Qualify for the May meetings in next year!' cried a second.

'Turn missionary, and reform rum-drinking aborigines!' said a third.

'Open a night school for the reformation of betting men!' chimed in a fourth.

'Turn tract-distributor!' cried a fifth.

'Stump the country on Temperance principles!' suggested a sixth.

In the course of the evening, and while card-playing was in full swing, Harvey and Isabel sat alone in the conservatory.

'Harvey,' she said, and her voice was as murmuring music to his ears, 'I must now intrust you with one of the secrets of my life, and with this secret there is connected a dreadful mystery. Four years ago, when I first made my *début* on a public stage, I assumed the name of Gascoigne, but my correct name is Hatherton—Isabel Hatherton!'

As Harvey listened to her words he trembled as an aspen leaf in summer's breeze, and his face turned ashen pale.

'I think, Harvey,' she continued, 'that you now divine what I am about to say. George Hatherton, whom you may remember to have seen at the various race meetings, and whose lifeless body was found a year ago in a cab at Acton, was my poor dear brother!'

Harvey arose from his seat and staggered forward, wildly flinging his arms to and fro, as if in mortal struggle with an unseen foe!

'You are not well, Harvey; perhaps this place is too close and hot for you,' cried Miss Gascoigne, much alarmed.

'Dear Isabel,' he said, faintly, 'heed me not, but pray proceed, and finish what you were about to tell me.'

'My brother's death,' she continued to say, 'was so very mysterious that I have always feared the worst, and now I

cannot banish from my mind the idea that the remains recently discovered in the fir plantation are in some way connected with his death. You will soon be my husband, Harvey; therefore I beseech you to do everything in your power to clear away the mystery which, like a dark cloud, hangs over my brother's name.'

Harvey enfolded her in his arms impulsively, kissing her lips and cheeks, but he was unable to make response in words to her earnest appeal. Shortly after this he left Colonel Wyeford's, under the plea of indisposition, and went direct to his own solitary rooms. He felt like a man who had forgotten, or erased from his memory, some hideous event of his past life which he had fondly imagined could never be recalled to his mind again; but suddenly he is awakened from his dream of forgetfulness by the uprising of a grim phantom, which threatens to haunt him evermore, and tells him, with a warning finger, that as long as his life lasts he shall be chained to its dread companionship.

CHAPTER VI.

HARVEY STANCOMB now saw that his hopes were wrecked and his peace of mind shattered, and the mode of life he had planned for himself an utter impossibility. His old haunts and familiar associates must know him no more. He dared not make Isabel his wife, the dark deeds of the night in the black pine wood inexorably forbade that. He abstained from visiting her during the next few days, and she wondered why he kept away; but when Tuesday morning came she received the following letter:—

'Dear Isabel,

'It is impossible for our union to take place; it is not that my love for you has abated, but because my love is so great that I shrink from plunging you into lifelong misery. If the prayers of a man such as I are ever heard, I would pray night and day for your happiness.

'Dearest Isabel, forgive and forget me! Farewell.

'HARVEY STANCOMB.'

This letter scattered Isabel Gascoigne's anticipations of a happy wedded life with the man she loved, and who she knew loved her. She felt as if she were a widowed wife before time was given her to receive even one nuptial kiss from the lips of her husband, as a wife whose husband was stricken with

death as bride and bridegroom stepped down from the altar. This day was a day of sighs and tears for Isabel, and from morn till night she remained alone, crushed with grief and sorrow.

Harvey Stancomb's brief and passionate dream of life was drawing to a close. In the fall of the year, when the ripe corn bends beneath the reaper's hook, and the leaves on the trees turn yellow, red, and brown, and faintly cling to the branches till the wild west wind comes and scatters them far and near—it was in this sweet and charming season of the year that Harvey Stancomb died. He was found dead in his parlour one morning, still sitting in his chair, his head resting upon the table, evidently not having been to his bed at all during the night.

'Syncope!' declared the doctor.

'Sorrow and remorse, and a broken heart at last!' were the words which the recording angel entered against Harvey Stancomb's name in the Book of Life!

Amongst his papers was found the draft of a will, wherein he bequeathed his money—several thousands of pounds—to her whom the world knew as Isabel Gascoigne.

His mortal remains were laid in Kensal Green Cemetery, not far from the spot where lie those of George Hatherton; and the only mourner at the graveside was the same lady who had followed Hatherton's remains to the same place exactly twelve months ago.

POLKA: A POLO PONY.

By CUTHBERT BRADLEY.



EVERYBODY who is anybody, and a great many people who are nobodies, are 'interviewed' nowadays for our amusement and instruction. Through the medium of current literature, we can get on terms of intimacy with all sorts and conditions of men and things, and every day the old saying becomes less true, 'One half the world never knows how the other half lives.' All are put on the rack, to render up the secrets of their lives and the tricks of their trades for our edification, so that we know all there is to

be known about the clowns, fiddlers, writers, dukes, bishops, beauties, idlers, and even the innocence and unblushing impudence of to-day.

That polo should have been decreed by fashion to be the pastime of the hour redounds greatly to the credit of the age, and our mind reverts to the palmy days of old Greece, when the Olympian games, arms, and valour were held in the highest esteem. Every season the ranks of polo are swelled by new aspirants, until the playing fields of Hurlingham and Ranelagh are full to overflowing, and beauty and fashion flock to the charming resorts to fix the seal of approval and decree that polo is the favoured entertainment of a London season. No wonder, then, that new clubs spring up in the provinces as quickly as mushrooms, and that polo is recognised as the adjunct of fox-hunting, so that the time is not very far distant when most hunts will boast a polo club, to show the farmers sport and encourage pony breeding. Next to the hunting field, the royal game ranks foremost amongst sports calculated to test the pluck and horsemanship of the youth of to-day, and therefore recommends itself to every Englishman. Our neighbours on the Continent are following our example, and polo has flourished in Paris for two seasons, the latest report being a proposed club for St. Petersburg.

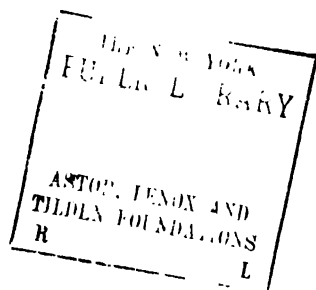
To those who imagine a polo pony to be nothing more than an extravagant toy, we would say he is just the best of his class, as near perfection in horseflesh as it is possible to imagine, a weight-carrying hunter in miniature with the quality of a rare-horse, 'fourteen hands of concentrated pluck'—a development of the nineteenth century that we may well be proud of. We make no apology for introducing to our readers one of the best ponies that ever looked through a bridle. 'She plays like a book, and would teach you more polo in one game than ever you could find out for yourself in a season.' Such was our introduction to Polka, a winsome, bright bay mare, whose splendid performances made the reputation of one of the most brilliant No. 2's that ever did battle on a polo ground.

Sure enough when we called, Madame was at home in her box—a spacious apartment in two shades of drab, and knee-deep with straw—and, on sending in our card with the magic word 'Polo' written upon it, we kindled the sacred fires of the game which for a while lay dormant. Pursing her lips and squealing with delight, Madame let drive with both her heels against the sides of her box, which made the timbers rattle, and so highly



Illustration by
J. B. B. B.

"The rush of the furious ride"



excitable was her temperament that during the whole interview her short tail swished incessantly.

'I perceive Madame is an enthusiast for polo, and loves the royal game, discrediting the idea that ponies only play on compulsion,' I remarked, by way of starting the ball rolling.

'Such an idea is only worthy of some one fit to don a pair of feather breeches, and sit on eggs,' replied Leathers, the old stud groom; 'anybody who has been on the back of a good pony in the game, could find out that for himself in a minute. I was the first to school this little mare at the game, and she took to polo as a young duck takes to the water.'

'From what you say, I may infer that a good pony can make the reputation of a player?'

'Most certainly. A good player in good company is lost if he is on a bad pony; and, as in the hunting field, many a young player has found his way into the front ranks by being mounted on first-class performers, and having the good sense to let their mouths alone.'

'There is nothing like a good seasoned old pony to teach a beginner. I am told Polka is a veritable prima donna of her profession—a past mistress in the art of playing polo!'

'I don't know nothing about no primer donters; all I know is, Polka in her day was just about as good as they make 'em, and could teach any young beginner the ropes how to play No. 2, because she would take him where he ought to go. You would not catch Polka out of her place in the game; though sometimes, sir, you do see a whole team sadly out of their places.'

'Now about prices, for that is one of the most powerful arguments brought against the game, on the score of extravagance. What is the price of a good polo pony?'

'I should say the value of a polo pony is the same as that of a hunter, for they fetch hunter prices now. The price as any one ought to pay for a pony should only be regulated by the length of his purse, but when they exceed this they don't do nobody no good.'

'A brilliant player, who makes a name and reputation for himself, puts up the value of his ponies when they come into market, I understand!'

'The price is often long, and correspondingly disappointing, because it does not buy the rider.'

'Since Dooker, the polo manager at Ranelagh Club has so carefully chronicled the doings of players and ponies in *Land*

and Water, he has, I understand, greatly added to the value of good playing ponies ?'

'Yes, sir, I know the gentleman ; he's run his eye over more polo ponies than any man living. He come to my master and ses, "Why don't you name your ponies, and then their performances would be known as well as those of any race-horse ?" So we give the little bay mare the name of *Polka*, and it was a name to conjure with, for everybody as reads about polo knows the name of *Polka*, and when we sent her up to Tattersall's she did set the yard nodding for her.'

'In spite of the bad times, polo ponies have made big prices this season, have they not ?'

'Three hundred and twenty guineas is the top price this season, for Charlton, a pony of great character, played in the Military Cup Tournament at Hurlingham ; but, as five out of the eight ponies ridden by the winning team—the 13th Hussars—were bought by them for 45*l.* a piece, it goes to prove the price of a polo pony, like that of a hunter, is just what you choose to pay for him.'

'Do ponies last many seasons, now that the game has become so fast and furious ?'

'They average the life of hunters, and keep going longer than many of their masters, who overrun the constable and have to disappear,' replied Leathers, with a grunt.

'I expect, the older a pony gets, the less inclined he is to risk the thumps and knocks ?'

'After a nasty cut or two, it is only natural they get into a way of saving themselves. With all the pretence of going up to their ponies, like a good one, an old pony will often scotch in the last stride, and cut it. Riders are just the same, with few exceptions ; but, directly you begin thinking about yourself, that's the time to give up polo.'

'What is your opinion about the increased height of polo ponies, the standard, I understand, having been increased two inches, so that now ponies that measure 14 hands 2 inches are polo height ?'

'I don't like it at all ; it puts the good, nippy little ponies that measure a hand less out of the game, and I consider it is the outcome of too much dwarf thoroughbred blood being infused into pony-breeding.'

'Then, is it your opinion that horses will ever be substituted for ponies in the game ?'

'A pony could walk round a horse at the game, being more compact, and quicker on his legs; and, besides, every inch on the length of a polo stick adds to the difficulty of hitting a ball with precision.'

'How is Polka bred, may I ask?'

'She is of Welsh extraction on her dam's side, and that is the fountain head of all pony blood, from which they get constitution, staying powers, and hereditary soundness. They tell me that her grandmother had a fiddle head and straight shoulders, with a crupper under her tail to keep the saddle from slipping right between her ears. Since ponies have come into fashion their breeding has received more care and attention, and the judicious use of thoroughbred sires has given them the symmetry, speed, and quality with the stoutness of a pony.'

'What a splendid fellow the young master was!' continued Leathers, giving free rein to thought, 'and how he could ride and glory in the elixir of pace. The harder Polka could lay legs to the ground, the truer he was on the ball, and many and many a time has he pinned his faith to her in a tight match to score the winning goal. It was always, "Have Polka ready, Polka's the pony to do the trick!"'

'There are red-letter days in polo, the same as hunting. Tell me of a real good one.'

'The most memorable match I can ever remember being played, which fixes itself in my mind above all other days, because its subsequent events went to shape the destiny of my master, self, and Polka, was the day our team, the Highflyers, met the Rambling Rangers in the final game for the Challenge Cup. Lor', sir, it was a tight game, believe me! I can't help a bursting into poetry, wrote by a Mr. H. Cumberland Bentley, and he plays the game and all, too.

"Search the world all h'over, take pastimes one and h'all,

No better game than polo you can find;

For, like life, its twists and turnings teach us h'all to give and take

And strengthen both the muscle and the mind;

So the 'flying ball' we follow ever on from goal to goal."

'Eight teams had entered to play for the cup, and the demand for ponies fit to win the coveted trophy was at fever height, and consequently some very extravagant prices were paid. It was more or less a gamble, because ponies of character who do brilliantly in a tournament go up in value, so that both

teams were advertising all their ponies for the week after the match, at Tattersall's! We had been very lucky in playing off our ties during the week, and had not been tried very highly, so that we were fit and well to do battle in the final game for the cup. The Rangers' team that we had to meet was one of the strongest, hardest lot of players who ever contested for a cup, and, being captained by one of the most powerful backs of the day, with a wrist of iron and the eye of a hawk, they were established as the favourite team. My master was in good form, playing No. 2 for the Highflyers, and had performed wonders, gaining much applause in his darts down the ground with the flying ball during the progress of the tournament. Now, however brilliant a dashing young No. 2 may be, full of ride and full of drive, with a rare unselfish No. 1 on in front to clear the road for him, it is quite another matter to be at your best when you and your pony are nearly bumped off your legs by a bruiser who uses his head as if it were a battering ram, and pushes with knee and elbow until the man whom he carefully nurses through the game is black and blue. The Rangers' half-back was certainly a terror, and he rode like a cattle puncher, his style of attack being calculated to upset the play of even the hardest-bitten player. The ponies were stabled at Hurlingham in those days, occupying three of the long line of boxes near the entrance lodge, and you may guess, as they stood with their heads out over the half-open doors on a fine summer's day, that the sight of 'em set one thinking who was a going to win that there cup. Our team of ponies were three: a black mare called Silhouette, a nasty-tempered one, who had her head covered up with a cloth when mounted, for fear the sight of her rider would be too much for her feelings, and she should worry him. The other was Rajah, a chesnut barb, and as hard as nails, for he could do any amount of work, although he was not very fast, and when the ground was wet and slippery he was perfectly cowed and afraid of slipping up. Of the three, Polka was a long way the favourite mount, and the goals were generally made from her back. How she did glory in pace, to be sure; the master would squeeze the last ounce out of her to get a goal. I worked very hard all that tournament week to keep my ponies on their legs and on their feed, for with the thermometer at 60 in the shade they had to be in good heart, to come through with flying colours.

'It was evident that we were to have the crowd of the season at Hurlingham to watch our game, and the stream of drags, car-

riages, and smartly dressed ladies showed how popular polo is with the fair sex. My master came round to the boxes whilst I was saddling and bandaging, and, gripping the firm muscles of Polka's neck, and smacking her in a familiar way under the flank, which made her squeal and seize the manger with her teeth and lash out with a heel, he exclaimed, "Fit as a fiddle, Polka, old girl; I don't care if I never ride a better one!" "Ay, sir, Polka's a rare bit of stuff," said I with pride, "I don't know where you would be in the match without her; but I hope you won't be very hard on the little mare this afternoon, sir, for she's as game as a pebble, and will keep going when the others have had enough." "Yes, but I shall have to ask her to go along this afternoon, for my only chance is to slip that dreadful half-back of the Rangers' team, or else he will knock me out of time. But Polka will do it, Polka never disappoints." Already the Guards band were well into a selection from the latest opera, and beauty and fashion had spread themselves out along the long row of chairs that fringe the boards of the polo ground.

'The two teams were soon facing one another in the arena, a last look being given to girth and stirrup, a last swing of the stick, to be sure it is the right length and weight, and then the ball was thrown in. My master made a start on Rajah, who was the slowest of his team, and I with the black mare and Polka were in readiness under the chestnut-trees. Play at first was not fast, the ball hung in mid ground, both teams making a stubborn defence, but at last a Ranger got away with it, and away they all thundered in hot pursuit, the ball going wide of goal. By this time both teams had settled to their places and taken one another's measure, so that my master came galloping to the boundary, and effected a quick change off Rajah on to Polka's back. He had not been playing many minutes before he had a taste of the opposing half-back, whose business it was to watch him as a cat does a mouse. He was mounted on a big, yawing barb, and rode with a spur in the near-side flank that made him come up alongside his ponies as if he would eat them, and break the rider's leg. The Rangers' captain shouted his orders from behind, and had his team perfectly in hand, and during the first twenty minutes of play so confused our man playing No. 1 that he put him twice "off-side." Just before the bell rang for the interval, there was a mighty "Who-whoop!" and the Rangers shot the first goal with a skying shot from their captain right over the heads of a surging mass of ponies.

"Silhouette next," said my master, "and have Polka ready again directly I want her," as he swung from her saddle looking a trifle pale and anxious, for both teams had been playing at very high pressure. Polka's girths were loosened, mouth washed out with half a bottle of water, and, turning her head to catch the breeze, with extended nostril and shaking tail, I set to work to scrape the sweat from her heaving flanks, and wipe her dry again.

'In ten minutes the bell rang, and again the scene was one of turning ponies, clash of stick, and stirrup ringing out against stirrup. The pace was faster, too, for the ball travelled, and in locked pairs rode the two teams, contesting every inch of ground, and playing sound polo all round. But the Rangers still kept the Highflyers on the defence, and, just missing a goal, sent the ball behind, and, quick as thought, my master seized the opportunity to change on to Polka again. The Highflyer captain hit the ball out right well, but who is that darting down the ground on the bay mare that whisks her tail at every stride? Why, young Glover, of course, on the redoubtable Polka! He has slipped the Rangers' half-back, and with two lengths' lead, increasing it at every stride, he means having the last ounce out of Polka to race that goal. Now is the moment to realise the rush of the furious ride, when in half a second defence is changed into attack, and every pony is on the stretch. The Rangers' captain is anathematising his half-back by all his gods, and imploring him to "Gallop, man, gallop, don't let him slip you!" and cutting whips are cracking and whistling, as every pony strains along to catch Polka and the flying man. Hitting straight and true, and with sufficient lead to take a steady pull at her for the final shot between the posts, then "Who-whoop!" we scored as brilliant a goal as was ever made.

'The last twenty minutes' play, with the score standing at one goal all, was bound to be exciting, and, if you had wanted to wager, the Rangers' team had slightly the odds. The little mare was called upon to do her full share in the final effort, with Silhouette to help her out, and although Polka had the best of constitutions, and could come and come again, it is harder work than a day's hunting, and tries them pretty high, I can tell you.

'Some up and down play followed, in which two or three promising runs were cut short, and neither side could get home, for every man was well in his place, and it was about as much as



Knocked out of the game!

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that Ranger half-back's reputation was worth if he let Polka give him the slip again. But our chance came at last; Polka turned a shade quicker than the barb, and set out on a run down the boards by the pavilion, with her enemy racing at her quarters, his rider calling on him with whip and spur. Bending over in his saddle, my master was hitting in his best form, when into him the barb came, and, with a clatter and desperate effort to keep on her legs, head over heels the little mare went, knocked clean out of the game.

'Polka scrambled on to her legs quickly enough, looking bruised and crestfallen, but my master lay stretched out on the greensward, stunned, and a collar-bone broken. A beautiful young lady was the first to go to his assistance, for it is always the brave who deserve the fair. The Highflyers got the goal though, and won the cup, in spite of my master's absence, and you may guess there was no end of enthusiasm and hand-shaking when they rode up to the pavilion to pledge one another in a bumper of champagne out of that hard-won champion cup.

'The ponies, after a week's rest, found their way to Tattersall's, with no end of a character for the part they had taken in the game. The bidding was very keen, and Polka soon ran into three figures with a two for the first one. She was bought by a heavy young fellow who was bitten with a keen desire to play polo with the best of them. He had a long purse and a loose seat; he tried to play her No. 1 in the game—a position she hated—and, knowing nothing of tactics himself, he messed her about, and soon disgusted her, so that she learnt to play cunning and think more of herself and less of the game. Again she changed hands, at a lower figure this time, becoming the property of a Cambridge boy, who did give her a hurried time of it, I can tell you, for when he was not hacking, or playing polo six days a week, he hunted or drove her tandem leader; consequently she got very stale and groggy. My young master having married the aforesaid young lady, who was as rich as she was beautiful, bought the little mare back again for an old song, to end her days in peace and rearing polo ponies of the future. The game is bound to go on and flourish, and every pony in the land will have to take to polo, for they will all be wanted at the rate the young men are entering to the game,' wound up Leathers, drawing his hand across his mouth just to remind me that talking is very dry work.

A TRIPLE ENTRY.

By 'THE PUP.'

TO the meet of the Quorndon one famed March morn
 Rode as merry a trio as ever was born ;
 When they came to the fixture on Dalby Green,
 Each determined on 'pounding' the others, I ween.
 There was Staunton from Eton, an awful 'swell,'
 With his 'topper,' and collar, and breeches as well ;
 And, when Lady Fitzconquest vouchsafed a smile,
 'Twas a treat to see Staunton perform with his 'tile.'
 'But,' thinks I to myself, 'though they've lots of pride,
 He shall play second fiddle as soon as we ride.'
 There was Mortimer, too, from old Harrow Hill,
 Quite determined he'd show to the front at the 'kill.'
 As for me, they looked down on my plain 'get up,'
 And I heard they had dubbed me the Rugby 'Bull Pup.'
 But methought 'they laugh longest' that see most fun :
 Ere you pound him that 'puppy' shall give you a run.
 Tom Firr gave a grin as he passed on his rounds,
 He could see 'twas a case of 'first day with the hounds,'
 And, 'bar accidents,' looked for an awful rush
 To get Eton, or Harrow, or Rugby the brush.
 For, though schoolboys on cobs cannot ride 'first flight,'
 Still, the oldsters show courtesy by waiving their right ;
 So, if ever a youngster is well 'to fore'
 On 'his first day,' for him a brush is in store.
 Ashby Pastures responded without demur
 When asked if they kept the right species of fur.
 His first point was for Guadalupe, then half round
 He swung over the Quorndon and Cottesmore bound,
 Gave us 'bellows to mend' over Burton Hill,
 Then dipped into the Flat and crossed the 'sweet' rill,
 With an ominous name to men of the chase ;
 And no sign of a check, at no end of a pace,—
 At a pace we three heroes found far too strong ;
 How we longed for a 'ring' as we pounded along !
 From the first had young Staunton maintained a lead,
 Which was due to the fact that he rode the best steed ;
 Even Mortimer, too, if the truth I tell,
 Was a furlong in front of my cob, 'Bonny Bell.'
 But when now we drew nigh the Whissendine stream,
 As athwart the dark storm-cloud the lightning doth gleam,

A new hope was revived in my anxious breast—
They would have to pull up at that brook with the rest,
For, as usual, but few of the foremost rank
Came in safety to ground on the Wymondham bank.
We had had quite enough better steeds to pump,
Although light was our weight we'd no thought of a jump.
They both tear down the meadow with anxious look,
For the likeliest spot to get over the brook.
I had heard the 'View, holloa!' to earth I bound,
And for Bonny Bell's bridle a rail is soon found;
Then I fly through the current, across the mead,
Trust to Shank's old pony, Dame Nature's tried steed.
Now a Rugby boy's training makes frames like wire,
They are long in the wind and go far ere they tire.
I'd no need to 'run cunning,' but went the pace,
For I knew it was nought to our animal race.
When I'd rattled along for two miles or more,
The light wind to my ears the glad tidings bore,
That a little to left, but few fields away,
They were showing poor pug it was 'settling day,'
When a fox says, 'Adieu,' to all earthly ills,
And atones at one stroke for his long poultry bills.
Then my step grew much lighter, my courage rose high,
I glanced backward to see if my friends I could spy.
Sure enough they had got o'er the brook at last,
But their chance of securing the trophy was past,
For Tom Firr was just holding the fox on high,
And provoking the hounds with his musical cry,
As I jumped the last binders and crossed the field,
Where his brush to the Quornites old Charlie did yield,
I'd no thought that in boots I could run so 'strong'
As I did 'mid the cheers of that cheering throng.
They were all the best riders, though numbers few,
As no horses were changed very few had got through;
And poor Staunton and Mortimer just came up
As Tom Firr was presenting the brush to the 'Pup';
But they said we'd *all* proved ourselves 'game' that morn,
So they 'blooded' the trio to ride with the Quorn.

KNOWLES ON THE SPOT.

By 'LEATHERHUNTER.'

MY old schoolfellow, Langly Crosby, came over to see me one day in June, with perplexity written on his face with a capital P. When I inquired the cause, he informed me that his club had a match '*on*' which it was of the utmost importance that they should '*pull off*,' in fact it affected the very existence of the club, '*for between you and me, old man,*' said he, '*the officials of our club have such heavy expenses (Langly was secretary and treasurer) in stationery, postage stamps, and, er— well, other things, that if we don't get a cheque from old Cheney, we shall be in much the same position as Gilbert the Gloucestershire man—debts, considerable; assets, four broken cricket bats.*' '*These,*' remarked the accountant, '*might have some value in the eyes of admirers of Gloucestershire cricket,*' but I doubt whether the *débris* of our Spoodale Club could be disposed of at more than firewood price, so Cheney's cheque is an absolute necessity, and Cheney's refusal an equally absolute certainty, unless we give the Crackthorpe team a hiding.

'I can quite understand that,' I replied, for I knew old Crackthorpe, of Crackthorpe, had been one too many for 'Squire' Cheney ever since they were at Eton together. Crackthorpe had carried off Cheney's '*intended*' by the 'Young Lochinvar' trick, only he used a dog-cart, instead of the best steed '*through all the wide Border.*' That dog-cart had a bit of blood between the shafts though, I fancy, for the lady's father knew a horse from a dromedary, and rode his favourite on the occasion; but the runaway pair cleared the Cheviots in ample time, and the irate father afterwards confessed that he wasn't sorry, for 'Crack' was a —d good fellow, and kept a good cellar, though he didn't like his distancing 'Merry Carlisle' on the occasion above referred to.

This was only one of a long series of encounters in which Cheney had continually come off second best, so Crackthorpe's cup was filled up when at the Smithfield Show he carried off the prize for the best beast in the three-year-old class with a Hereford, though Cheney had gone to the expense of a magnificent Shorthorn from the herd of his Gaddesby namesake.

You will understand, from the Alpha and Omega I have given you, that Langly was correct in his appreciation of the mutual feelings of the two 'Squires,' and the importance to the Spoodale exchequer of winning the Crackthorpe match.

I intimated as much, and inquired what I could do to help him in the matter.

'I want you not only to play, but to captain our team,' he replied; 'you are an honorary member of the club, therefore eligible to play.'

'True,' I said, 'but though I shall be pleased to play for the Spoodale, and give the Crackthorpe as much as I can to remember my name by, I don't quite see why I should be skipper.'

'I don't want to flatter you,' said Langly; 'indeed you will have to remember my instructions very carefully if your captaincy is to be of any avail.'

'Why don't you captain the team yourself, then?' I inquired.

'Suppose you had a "four-in-hand" to drive, and both leaders and wheelers were screws with whom you had an intimate acquaintance, from having frequently touched them on the raw, wouldn't you think it wise to get some other fellow to handle the ribbons, if any importance attached to tooling that coach to a certain place in a certain time?'

'Yes, well?'

'Just our position, "Leather." You never saw such a set of screws as the Spoodale team. In the first place, they can't keep the leather on the turf to save their lives, not one of them. Perhaps I had better give you a detailed account of the individual members, so that you may know how to handle them. First comes Knowles, so fat he can't run them out when other folks get them; but he has one good quality, if he gets one a little over pitched, he can send it to "long on" with plenty of powder behind it, and he dosen't forget to put it between the fielder and bowler either. I shall never forget one of the Studds trying in vain to catch one of his "spoons," but he can't carry any other point in the field in his eyes, and the trundlers getting alive to this take particular care not to feed him with too many long pitched "off" balls, consequently *he* is not very likely to keep the scorers busy, and, bad as he is, I believe Knowles is the best bat in the team. Parker can handle the leather *sometimes*, but at other times he runs up the "extras" to a fearful extent,

and he can't handle the willow at all. If you want to know how *not* to bat carefully study Parker's style, it is very simple. You keep your bat in the "block hole" till the ball is close on, when you suddenly remember to raise it so that there may be a variation to the monotony in the timber yard. Then, if you take him off trundling, he thinks you are egotistical and sulks; that is one reason for my asking you to captain us. If once he goes off colour he wants changing, and he can field very well at cover point, but if I took him off bowling he would sulk, as I said, and be no use at all.'

'Charley Kellam is as different as possible. He bats in the Hornby style as near as he can, but I needn't tell you that it is a style likely to lead to disastrous results when practised by a member of the Spoodale Eleven. I believe Charley might have become a serviceable bat had he not in an evil hour gone to the Old Trafford Ground and seen Mr. A. N. Hornby sending the Tykes' bowling in every direction, without any regard to the orthodox rules of batting. Among other heresies he copied from the Lancashire captain was that of hitting an off ball through the slips left-handed, instead of cutting it, but, when he tried to show off his newly acquired stroke at Spoodale, his bat somehow came round and gave Harry Makin, who was wicket keeping, such a whack on the head that he preferred standing at "long leg" ever afterwards.'

'Well, to proceed with my description of the team,' he continued, 'the next three have any amount of blind spots instead of one which ought to satisfy any reasonable wielder of the willow. That makes five, and we two make seven; as regards the other four, they are all too fond of making a show, which they do as a rule—*of themselves*; so you know now exactly what you are undertaking when you try to steer us to victory and old Cheney's cheque.'

'You seem to have an accurate knowledge of your own team, Langly,' I replied; 'do you know much of the Crackthorpe?'

'They will lick us unless something can be done in the way of strategy, and, as I told you a while ago, that means the breaking up of our club, at least for the time being.'

'Unless we can find a joint in their armour, I don't see my way to winning a match with such a team as you describe,' I replied; 'at any rate, you'll join in and do what you can, won't you?'

'Certainly, and we'll look at the ground together to-morrow.

Something can be done at times by arranging the preliminaries of a match.'

Accordingly we surveyed the ground, and saw where Bennet, the groundman, had decided to make the pitch. I noticed that in one corner of the field there was a gravel pit, long disused and covered with turf, but a sufficiently unusual feature on a cricket field to make a ball sent into it a 'boundary hit.' It occurred to me that, of all the hopeful crew Langly had described to me, the only one likely to get into double figures was Knowles, so of him I determined to make what use I could. Calling Bennet aside, I suggested that the pitch should be slightly altered, and when he demurred, on the ground of the thing being 'neither long-ways nor cross-ways,' I over-ruled his objections with the aid of a half-dollar, which proved to have been well expended so far as the Spoodale Club was concerned. Langly could no more conceive why I wanted the pitch askew than the groundman could, and I kept my own counsel; but they found it out when the match came off, and that gravel hole simply played the deuce with the Crackthorpe. I knew that a man like Knowles would be extremely liable to 'come off' if he hadn't too much running to do, so I had the pitch arranged obliquely to get the gravel pit exactly in the line of 'the Porpoise's' favourite hit—for that matter, I don't believe he could hit a ball in another direction, and the tune to which he ran up the Spoodale score, without any trouble in passing over the historic 'twenty-two,' smiling benignly the while, made the Crackthorpe *look* wild, and, what was more to the point, *bowl* wide.

We won that match by ten runs, though I only contributed a miserable dozen myself, and Langly was bowled 'first ball' with a 'shooter,' which goes to show that the battle of Trase-men-us was not the only instance of victory being achieved through a shrewd appreciation of the topographical features of a battlefield.

I believe the cheque was 'a bumper,' for I heard old Cheney say as he slapped his thigh with all the satisfaction written on his face of a man who has just received the tidings that he is Senior Wrangler, or has won the Derby—especially the latter—'I've pounded that beggar at last,' and there was no more talk of the Spoodale 'putting the shutters up;' but Joe Mason, one of the Crackthorpe Eleven, button-holed me one day, and said, 'Look here, old fellow, we don't mind how much you send us leather-hunting in a fair way, but hang it all, when you come

to twisting the ground about to suit a one-point slogger, I do consider Crackthorpe unfairly handicapped.'

'You didn't howl much, did you?' I retorted.

'Howl! who wouldn't howl to see that fellow nearly bursting his buttons off with satisfaction at seeing Johnnie Clayton condemned to fish his precious ball out of that horrible gravel pit?'

'*La Fortune de la Guerre*, Joseph,' I replied; 'take your hiding and look pleasant—the Spoodale have scored for once.'

GOLF IN A FOUR-PAIR BACK,*

OR, THE SONG OF A BROKEN-DOWN GOLFER.

By 'ROCKWOOD.'

T'M a puir Scotch golfer, broken doun, my last ball's on the tee;
My mind rins on St. Andrew's toun when winds blaw aff the sea.
A' through the green, or on the green, fu' aft I've held ma ain,
And monie a guid game I have seen and monie a game I've ta'en.
But, oh! came cruel fortune cauld—alas that bank that brak'—
For noo I am a golfer auld, within a Four-pair Back.

It's monie a mile o' London walls, fu' oft I've driven o'er,
And I have lofted o'er St. Paul's, and crossed the Thames in four.
And monie a time I tak' the cleek, and play through sand and gorse,
My ball it isna hard to seek, for eight feet ten's the course.
The niblick brassie and the spoon, it's a' betimes I tak',
And then I finish up the roun—within my Four-pair Back.

It's monie a time, as club I draw, I hit the ceiling sair,
'Then watch imagination's ba' gang whizzing through the air.
And monie a time I whack the floor, and raise a de'elish din,
The landlady she opes the door, and, tigress-like, walks in.
And monie a time she tells me straight—my heid has got a crack—
And that I must just gang my gait from oot her Four-pair Back.

St. Andrew's links, or Prestwick muir, or by the Berwick Law,
When time was ne'er oppressed by care how oft I've drove my ba'.
Oh, memories past! oh, days so dear! how do you haunt me so?
A gouty cripple I am here, that no one here doth know.
Alane, alane, my fortune gane, mysel' a leevin' wrack,
I play a single, a' ma ain, within my Four-pair Back.

* *Four-pair Back*—a London back attic up four pair of stairs.

AND BY A WOMAN, TOO!

A TALE OF THE TURF.

By FINCH MASON.

PART I.

NOT so very many years ago a certain amiable young nobleman—but ill-fortified with brains wherewith to encounter with any hope of success the large army of harpies who made a dead set at him from the very first moment of his coming into his own—in the course of an action brought against him by a West-end usurer to recover a large sum of money lent during his minority, and which, acting under advice, he defended with success, was asked by the learned judge what his reason was for borrowing the money in question. He replied, that he did so to enable him to go on the turf, adding naïvely, amidst a roar of laughter from the whole court, that he hoped by so doing to increase his income.

In spite of the amusement caused by the noble lord's remarks, I believe that, if the truth were out, it would be found that a goodly number—I am not sure I should not be right in saying a majority—of those who make the so-called 'sport of kings' their principal amusement in life do so quite as much for what they hope to make out of it as for pure love of the thing. And how few, how very few, *do* ever succeed in making a good thing out of it! especially amongst that class of our countrymen who, to use an Americanism, are styled the 'upper ten thousand.' Still, a few manage, somehow or other, to hold their own with the ring year by year, notwithstanding the heavy odds against them, and, unless rumour lied for once in a way, decidedly the most successful among these was that well-known sporting peer, the Earl of Balbriggan, who, in the course of a long career on the turf, had brought off more big *coups* than any man breathing, and had hit the ring time after time uncommonly hard—much harder than that astute body liked, indeed—and, strange to say, had never been 'countered' by them in return.

I think, therefore, that the Earl of Balbriggan and Baron Blarney, of Castle Blarney in Ireland, Kittywake Court in the county of Holdtighshire, and Berkeley Square, London, D.L., J.P.; Clubs: the Carlton, White's, Boodle's, and the Turf, as he is

described in the Court Guide, may safely be put down as a very clever man—a very clever man indeed. And he *looked* the part, too, all over.

‘Cast your eye over him,’ as the horse-dealers say, as, faultlessly attired in garments of the soberest hues, he picks his way daintily across Piccadilly *en route* to White’s or Boodle’s, looking for all the world as if he had just been turned out of a bandbox. You would admire his boots, fall in love with his coat, and envy the way he—or rather, his valet—folded his neckcloth, and then, when you had arrived at the fresh rosy face with its perpetual smile and neatly trimmed white whiskers, its clear grey eyes that twinkled merrily underneath the rather heavy eyebrows, and seemed to take in everything around them at a glance, and if you had any pretensions whatever to be a physiognomist, you would exclaim—you couldn’t help it—‘That’s just about the most knowing old card I’ve ever seen.’ And so he was, and, what is more, no one was better aware of the fact than my Lord Balbriggan himself.

He was uncommonly proud of his turf successes, and made no secret that he attributed them entirely to the fact that he had remained a bachelor, and consequently had no one to think of but himself. The ladies, indeed, were not far wrong when they dubbed him by common consent as the most selfish old wretch in England.

As for the men, they liked him fairly well, for his shooting and fishing were of the best, his cook not to be surpassed, and when he entertained did the thing really well, and was quite a pleasant host. But for all that he was not what you could call a popular man, the principal reason for this being, without doubt, the selfish turf policy he invariably affected. Handicapping was his hobby, as his trainer was fond of saying, and it was in this species of race that my lord had achieved his greatest triumphs. He laid himself out for them, in fact, and when he had got ‘a good thing’—an event which, as I have said, had occurred several times during his turf career—he took very good care to keep it entirely to himself. He looked after No. 1, in short, and no one else.

Most people have what they are pleased to call their ‘best friend,’ which rightly interpreted means, I fancy, some one to whom they can confide any secrets or trouble they may happen to have about them—wife gone wrong, eldest boy going to the bow-wows, and so on.

Lord Balbriggan hadn't a 'best friend,' and, if he had, I feel quite certain that he would not for one moment have been so weak as to dream for a moment of allowing him to share in a stable secret. Nay, it is my sincere belief that he would just as soon put him on a 'wrong un' as not, if, by so doing, he would have served his own interests in any way.

And now my lord had got no less than seven gee-gees, all in the Cambridgeshire together, every one of them with a decided chance; and, the rumour having got about that their noble owner was going for the biggest *coup* he had ever yet attempted, the sporting public in general, and his friends in particular, were mad to find out which particular nag amongst his lot was the one he meant to bring off the 'good thing' with.

There were a lot of good horses entered, and it was generally considered to be an open race; but, for all that, the knowing ones were strongly of opinion that Lord Balbriggan held the key to the situation. What made it the more puzzling was that six out of his lot of seven were all exposed horses, the seventh being a three-year-old who, owing to sickness and one cause or another, had never yet run. He *might* be the best horse in England, or the worst.

Oh, if the punting public could only get to know!

Lord Balbriggan knew, or, at all events, pretty well guessed, and walked about with the great secret locked up in his selfish old bosom more airily and Charles Mathewsy than ever.

If he had known though—if he had only known what a mine was being sprung under his very nose for his benefit, he would, I verily believe, have scratched all his horses for the Cambridgeshire then and there, and gone about in a bath-chair for the remainder of his days. But he didn't, or this story would never have been written.

PART II.

AS I have already mentioned, Lord Balbriggan was a bachelor, but it must not be supposed that because he objected to matrimony in his own case, for reasons which I stated, that he had an aversion to the society of the fair sex, for, as a matter of fact, he yielded to none in his admiration of a pretty woman, and he flattered himself, probably with reason, that he was as good a judge of one when he saw her as he was of a racehorse, and that is saying a good deal, for as a connoisseur of horseflesh, more especially the thoroughbred, his lordship had few equals

and no superiors. So said his trainer, and if any one should know surely he was the man.

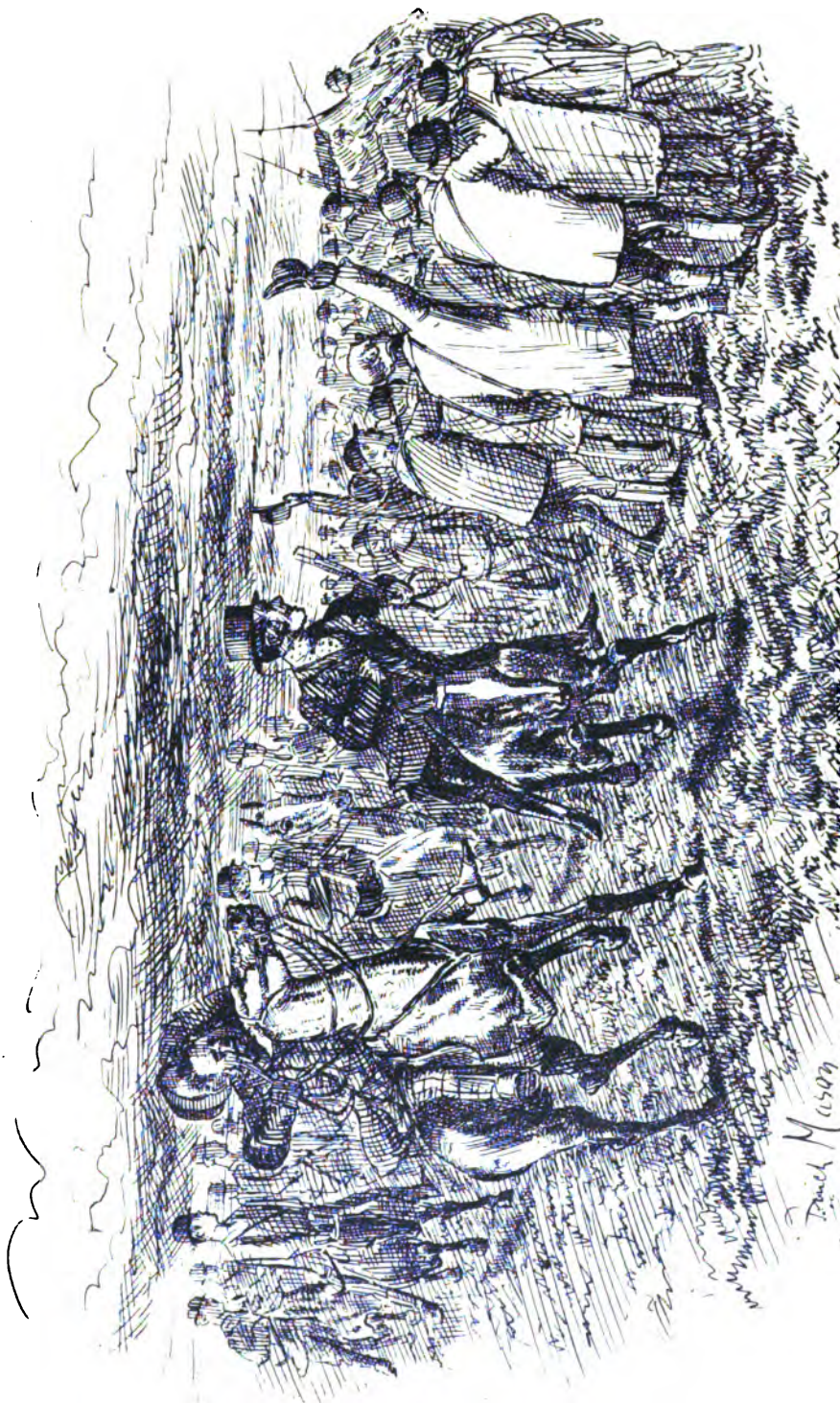
Lord Balbriggan was so wrapt up in his racing that he went very little into society; when he did, though, he had the knack of making himself wonderfully agreeable, so much so as to cause many a match-making mamma to give vent to expressions of regret that one so eminently desirable in every way should not deem it incumbent upon him to provide himself with a Countess.

With the light-hearted inhabitants of what our lively neighbours over the way term the 'half-world' he was equally at home, only more so, and that 'dear old thing,' 'that jolly old chap,' as they called him alternately, was made welcome at many a little supper and dinner at home or abroad, where fun and frolic ruled supreme, and free-and-easiness the order of the day, or rather night.

Sometimes he would play host on his own account, and an admirable one he made, nothing ever putting him out except an abortive attempt, perhaps, on the part of one of the party to get a 'tip' from him concerning his horses. Such a proceeding invariably 'put him about' very much.

Now, amongst the very large army of punters all dying to know which of my lord's seven horses was the one to go for for the Cambridgeshire, there was not one so anxious as a certain charming little widow rejoicing in the name of Mrs. Clayton, residing in the very same thoroughfare in which Lord Balbriggan now lived—Curzon Street, Mayfair, to wit. Who she was, and who and what her husband had been, nobody seemed to know. She plumped her fair form down in Curzon Street one fine day, drove about in a very well turned out Victoria, rode the neatest of hacks in the park, attended church regularly, armed with a velvet and gold Prayer-book, was seen everywhere where smart people most do congregate, and—well, that's all. You would not see her name in the *Morning Post* amongst those present at the ball given by the Duchess of Blank, or the Countess of Dash, so presumably she was not 'in Society,' as it is called, and her friends apparently were mostly of the opposite sex; but she was always well dressed and in the best of health and spirits, and got the credit, whether rightly or wrongly, of enjoying life as well as the best of us.

If those who had gazed admiringly at the pretty widow, as she drove up Piccadilly in the smart Victoria one fine afternoon in October, smiling and showing her pearly teeth as she acknow-



My horse wins!

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ledged salutations right and left, could have seen the same woman an hour later all alone in her boudoir, the smiles all gone from the fair face, and a settled frown taking their place, whilst the tiniest of feet beat the devil's tattoo on the hearthrug, it is not too much to say that they would hardly have recognised her. Had they been asked to give an opinion, and have said, Here was the most unhappy woman in London, they would not have been far wrong.

Blanche Clayton, the pretty widow, with apparently an unlimited capacity for enjoying life, and abundant means to enable her to do so, was in reality a penniless adventuress, and a gambler of the first water, dependent solely on backing winners for her means of livelihood. She had had a perfectly dreadful year, finishing up with a disastrous Cesarewitch, and the long and the short of it was, that unless she succeeded in backing the winner of the Cambridgeshire, it was a case of 'good-bye' to the little house in Curzon Street, the smart Victoria, the perfect hack—in short, everything that made life worth the living.

'Nothing short of ten thousand will set me straight. If I only knew which of his horses was the pea, as Jack expresses it!' she muttered. Oh, for ten minutes with that horrid old Balbriggan all by myself—only ten minutes,' she went on, 'and if I didn't worm it out of him my name is not Blanche Clayton.'

'Ten minutes!' she exclaimed out loud. 'I *will* have ten minutes—ten—twenty—thirty—and I *will* find out which is the best, and before many hours are over, too, so look out for yourself, my lord! clever as you think yourself, you've a desperate woman against you this time,' and Mrs. Clayton, her face once more brightening up, rang the bell for tea. 'Nothing like a cup of tea when one has to put one's thinking cap on,' she murmured to herself, as she sank back in her chair.

PART III.

MRS. CLAYTON had not settled down in her little home in Curzon Street very long, you may depend, before Lord Balbriggan, to use a favourite 'up-to-date' expression, 'spotted' her, and a very high opinion he formed of her charms. 'Intelligent, well-set-on head, capital legs and feet, and first-rate action—devilish pretty little woman,' he said to himself one Sunday morning, as the fair widow tripped daintily along in front of him, on the way to church. 'Must get to know her,' he thought.

Somehow or another, however, though he fully intended to make her acquaintance, the meeting had never yet taken place, and a merry twinkle of the eyes on her part, and a roguish look in her elderly admirer's, whenever they met in the street—looks that said plainly, 'We *ought* to know each other, why don't we?' were the only signs of recognition that had passed between them.

Imagine, then, my lord's delight, when, on arriving at Waterloo Station one morning, for the purpose of running down into ——shire, expressly to try his Cambridgeshire horses, and peering into each carriage as he walked along the platform, he suddenly caught sight of his fair Curzon Street neighbour, snugly ensconced, all by herself, in the corner of a first-class compartment. In he got, without the slightest hesitation. A little start from the lady, an elaborate bow from my lord, and 'I think we are near neighbours, are we not, and ought to know each other? my name—ahem—is Lord Balbriggan,' said with the most engaging expression he could put on, settled the business at once, and in two minutes they were the best of friends, and chatting away as if they had known each other all their lives.

'And so you are going to spend the day at Chivystoke, are you,' said my lord—'the station before mine. Ah, well, I'm going to spend the day with my trainer,' he added, with a sigh, as much as to say, 'I wish I were going to spend it with you.'

'And do you keep race-horses?' she exclaimed ecstatically, 'how charming! I have been to Sandown, of course, several times, and I *do* think they are so pretty. I won quite a number of pairs of gloves, Lord Balbriggan, the last time I went to Sandown; am I not a dreadful gambler?'

'Shocking, shocking!' exclaimed my lord, in mocking accents. 'Some of these days you must put a sovereign or two on one of *my* nags, and try and win something worth having,' he added gallantly.

And then an idea struck my lord, and 'by George,' he thought to himself, 'I'll carry it out, too!' It was nothing more or less than to engage the fair lady in conversation, make her forget all about her station, and then, after a great pretence of sorrow, &c., propose to her that she should spend the day with *him* and the horses.

It came off splendidly. Though the solitary porter at the little roadside station bawled out 'Chivystoke, Chivystoke,' at the top of his voice, Mrs. Clayton never took the slightest notice until the train had moved on, when she murmured, 'Dear me, what station was that we passed, I wonder? I quite forgot to look.'

And Lord Balbriggan was so sorry, so grieved. How on earth he could have been so stupid and forgetful he couldn't think.

His fair companion, though naturally rather annoyed, took the mistake in very good part, and, on finding out at the next station that there was no train for about five hours, she at last consented to the arrangement proposed by Lord Balbriggan, and accepted his invitation to spend the day with him at his training establishment.

As the pair got into the trainer's waggonette, little Mrs. Clayton's face was a picture, so radiant was it with happiness.

'Dash it, she's the prettiest woman I ever saw in my life, hanged if she isn't!' thought his lordship.

They spent a delightful day. The trainer gave them a most elaborate luncheon, and afterwards the great Cesarewitch trial took place, the dark three-year-old winning with such ease as to make the Cambridgeshire little short of a gift for him.

'What a *coup* it will be!' thought my lord, hugging himself at the prospect.

'Thank Heaven! I shall get straight again before long,' thought little Mrs. Clayton, her heart beating with concentrated excitement.

When they got into the train once more to return to town, Lord Balbriggan told his fair companion that he had never enjoyed a day so much in all his life. And, strange to say, he really meant it.

Poor man, he little dreamt of the mine that was about to be sprung upon him.

The train had hardly started, and my lord was looking forward to a delightful conversation with his charmer all the way up to town, when little Mrs. Clayton begged to be excused whilst she wrote a telegram, a form for which she produced from a travelling bag she had with her. When she had done, she looked up straight into my lord's eyes the while she calmly said: 'I am going to send this off from the next station we come to, Lord Balbriggan; would you like to read it first?'

My lord out with his *pince-nez*, and took the telegram with a smile from her pretty, well-gloved hand, and this is what he read:

*From CLAYTON, Curzon Street, to JOHNSON,
Victoria Club,
Wellington Street, W.C.*

*Put me monkey each way, young one, Cambridgeshire, don't
lose moment.'*

To express Lord Balbriggan's feelings when he read the telegram would be impossible. It was a plant, of course, and such a plant!

Why, the little devil must be the cleverest woman in England—a Bismarck in petticoats. He actually admired her more than ever.

The telegram must not go to-night. If it did, a nice, short price he would have to take about his horse.

He forthwith began to try all the powers of persuasion at his command on his fair companion. Alas! they were not of the slightest avail. Persuasion being of no avail, he tried bribery.

Starting at a thousand, he ran up to five. 'Hang it all!' exclaimed he in despair, on this handsome offer being declined. 'What *will* you take? Will you take *me*?' said he, in a sort of shriek of desperation.

'You really mean that you will marry me, if I destroy this telegram?' said Mrs. Clayton, now all smiles.

'I do, indeed! 'pon my honour I do,' replied my lord, with all the fervour of a most devoted lover.

The next instant, and the telegram, torn into twenty pieces, went flying out of window.

* * * * *

The three-year-old won the Cambridgeshire in a canter, and his noble owner won a fortune thereby—the greatest *coup* he had ever brought off, indeed.

The day previously he was married to little Mrs. Clayton.

'A good double event,' said my lord: 'I never thought, though, at my age, I should have been fooled as I was—and by a woman, too!'

* * * * *

It is not given to every man to bring off a 'double event' of such importance as to marry a wife one day, and win the Cambridgeshire the next; but this was the feat my Lord Balbriggan accomplished successfully.

Turfites could not make out for the life of them why my lord was absent from the Heath on the opening days of the meeting, and his three horses left in the Cambridgeshire were rather roughly handled in the market in consequence.

Except his best man and his valet, indeed, I don't believe a soul knew of the wedding, which was strictly private, until it was well over. Great was the excitement, therefore, when his Lordship and his lovely bride—the latter looking positively radiant

with happiness, cantered on to the Heath on the Cambridgeshire day, and the event oozed gradually out. Greater still was the excitement—especially in the ring—when it became public property—thanks entirely to the brand-new Lady Balbriggan, who, greatly to her credit, and somewhat to her lord's annoyance, insisted on divulging the secret—that Merrylegs, the three-year-old before mentioned, was the pick of my lord's basket, had been backed to win a fortune, and, in fact, was expected to win in a canter.

What a red-hot 'un he was, to be sure !

The happy pair had not been on the course an hour before the colt came to two to one, taken and wanted.

And what a good thing it was !

Merrylegs was bang in front all the way, pulling double, and the moment his jockey let him out it was all over but shouting.

'My horse wins! my horse wins!' screamed Lord Balbriggan, in frantic excitement, as, followed closely by my lady, he galloped alongside the rails. 'My horse wins! I've backed him to win me fifty thousand pounds, and I wouldn't take forty-nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine pounds, for my bet.'

It is pleasant to add that my lord is very happy in his wife, the only thing that ever jars upon his feelings being that he is never able to keep his 'good things' all to himself, as of yore.

It is astonishing how popular he has become on the turf, in consequence.

STAG VERSUS BAG.

By MAURICE NOEL.

THE days were beginning to shorten, and the nights to turn cold, and one would have supposed that elderly midges, with several feet in the grave, would have made arrangements for leading a better life, and making themselves less disagreeable, but one would have supposed wrong !

At any rate, George Shirley and I were so furiously attacked by them one October evening, as we sat outside our Highland lodge after dinner, that we were fairly routed, and went to ground in the smoking room.

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There we found our host—Sir John Maxwell—and complained.

‘Well,’ said he, ‘there are no midges in here, so you may finish your pipes in peace; by the way,’ he added, ‘have you boys settled what you are going to do to-morrow?’

‘We have settled to kill thirty brace of grouse,’ answered Shirley.

‘Yes,’ said I, ‘we have given the hill between the two cairns a long rest, and in this fine still weather the birds ought to lie well—and you, Sir John, what are your plans?’

‘I shall make my way to the tops, and look at the corries—there are only a few days left for stalking, for the stags are beginning to roar.’

‘I wouldn’t give much for your chance,’ remarked Shirley—‘the deer seem to have left the ground altogether.’

‘There are very few about, I know,’ returned Sir John; ‘but I have a better chance of getting a beast, than you have of killing thirty brace, so late in the season.’

‘We’ll take odds about it,’ said I.

‘Yes,’ said Shirley, ‘and lay you the same you don’t bring home a stag.’

Sir John smiled, and knocked the ash off his cigar.

‘I’ll tell you what I’ll do,’ he said at last. ‘We ought to give the ladies an interest in our proceedings, so I’ll promise them each a dozen pairs of gloves, if you get your thirty brace, and if you fail, and I get my stag, you shall give them the same.’

‘Agreed!’ we both cried together.

So we went into the drawing-room, and told the ladies (four of them) what we had arranged.

They thought it an excellent idea! ‘But if neither party is successful?’ said Miss Maxwell, who was engaged to Shirley, ‘what then?’

‘Then no gloves,’ answered Sir John, laughing.

‘In that case, I recommend you all to sleep out on the hill,’ remarked the young lady, ‘for you will find a cold welcome here!’

‘There’s gratitude!’ I cried. ‘Lay a man twelve pairs of gloves to nothing, and he’ll think it a good thing; it isn’t half good enough for a lady, though.’

‘Nothing *can* be,’ retorted Miss Maxwell; ‘but what does a poor bachelor like you know about it? go early to bed, my

cousin, and try to shoot straight to-morrow. I will set you a good example, and retire at once.'

As we meditated a very early start next morning, Shirley and I soon turned in.

Long before the ladies were up, next day, we mounted our ponies, and set off for the far end of the beat, so as to take advantage of what little wind there was, as we worked back along the face of the hill. It was a splendid morning, but gave promise of being rather too hot for the dogs—there was hardly a cloud in the sky, and we could not hope to find the scent very good. We began badly enough, found very few grouse, and, although these lay well, they took very long flights when once put up, and we hardly ever got a second chance at a pack.

The shooting, however, was good enough, we had been together all the season, and could trust each other to take our shots properly, and not to interfere with each other, so we accounted for most of the birds we shot at.

'If you don't mind some stiff work,' said Shirley, at last, 'I think we had better try the hill, up and down, instead of taking a line along the face; we shall have a side wind, and if, as is often the case, most of the birds are lying at about the same level, we shall find out what line to take. I rather fancy we have been working too low.'

This turned out to be the case, for after climbing up and down the mountain several times, we found that what birds we moved were mostly high up—here, however, for some distance, the heather was short, and the grouse, in consequence, were hard to get near, but we had the satisfaction of seeing that they kept to about the same line, and all went on towards some good cover for which we were making.

By half past twelve we were quite ready for lunch, and finding a lovely spot by a burn, evidently intended by Nature to invite the consumption of sandwiches and sherry, we laid out our bag, and found we had only killed seven brace. This was discouraging, but we did not despair, as we had the best of the ground and the best of the day before us, so we gave ourselves and the dogs a good long rest in the heather. When the creels had been replaced on the ponies, and we were ready to start afresh, we missed one of the dogs.

'Where is old Bang?' asked Shirley.

'Deed,' replied his gilly, 'an he was here not five minutes ago.'

'Look! look!' cried John MacPhee, the keeper; 'there are birds in front of him whateffer.'

True enough, at the bottom of the very knowe on which we were standing, the steady old dog was feathering up to a patch of thick heather. So we slipped in our cartridges and slowly followed him.

The pack lay well, and a fine one it proved to be; Shirley and I each got a right and left, and the rest of the birds swept along the hill side exactly in the line we wished them to take. We had hardly moved on, before three birds got up and flew across to the left, I took the rear one, and Shirley dropped the other two. Almost immediately afterwards, another large pack rose right in front of us, and again we each got a brace, and then, curiously enough, three birds crossed in front of me, of which Shirley took one, and I the others.

This was satisfactory, seven brace in less than seven minutes, all very easy shots, it is true, but clean, good, work.

For the next hour, we had some pretty shooting, though the birds were not very plentiful, which was hardly to be wondered at, as we had thinned them considerably during the season. By the time we reached the bare ground beyond the thick heather, we had bagged 23 brace in all, and it was hardly four o'clock.

'Come,' said Shirley, 'we ought to be able to make up our number somehow.'

'I hardly know how we had better try the ground now,' said I, 'the hill is bare for ever so far on, and very few birds have gone back.'

'Let us work along to the point from which we started,' suggested Shirley, 'trying a bit lower, it's down wind, to be sure, but we are bound to get back somehow.'

'Very well,' I answered, 'we'll take a narrow strip, and waste no time.'

We only picked up three odd birds, as we made our way back, which it took us more than an hour to do. Then, after a nip of whiskey all round, and a few pulls at the pipe, we started once more.

By this time, however, the wind had completely died away, and the dogs, not to mention ourselves, found it very hot work. Up and down the mountain, however, we worked with a will; we only wanted 11 birds more, and these we were determined to have! But fortune seemed to have deserted us, we found very

few birds, and those went wrong, the dogs putting up one or two lots out of shot. This was not their fault, as there seemed to be absolutely no scent, and as time went on, and our hard work was only repaid by an occasional shot, the ladies seemed likely to go without their gloves.

Time, six—bag, 27 brace !

‘Where on earth have all the birds gone to?’ cried Shirley, as we paused for a moment, and the dogs lay down.

‘You’ve shot them all,’ I answered.

‘We only want six birds more,’ said he; ‘get them we must, and will.’

‘Come on, then, but we shall have to walk them up, I fancy.’

‘For the dogs were absolutely done; we only had two brace with us, and had worked one brace at a time, so as to rest the others, but they had had a long day, and the want of all scent was discouraging—we could hardly get them away from us.

‘Cock, cock-cock-a,’ crowed an old bird in triumph, as he rose behind Shirley, who had walked clean over him; but he hadn’t time to finish his remark before my friend turned round, and dropped him neatly into a small burn. This proved to be our last bird—it was already getting dusk, and we had to make for the lodge.

The ladies were expecting us.

‘Well,’ cried they in a chorus, ‘what’s the bag?’

‘You had better count the birds,’ replied Shirley, ‘perhaps you will be able to make 30 brace of them.’

So they were neatly laid out on the little lawn in front of the lodge, but the ladies, with the best intentions in the world, could only make out 27 brace and a half.

‘Five birds short!’ said Miss Maxwell, slowly and distinctly. ‘No less than five. Very well, gentlemen.’

Then they each gave us a scornful look (at least they told us afterwards it was *meant* to be scornful), and walked away.

Oh, but the tub was delicious that evening, and, though the ladies said we did not deserve any at all, how we enjoyed our dinner!

Sir John had not yet returned, so the ladies still had a chance. He had expected to be late, as he had a long way to drive down the glen. Shirley and I had half finished our first pipe, and were fighting our battles over again, when we heard his wheels.

‘Dinner first!’ cried Sir John, on being besieged by

inquiries, 'I positively cannot *speak* till after I have refreshed the inner man.'

So the ladies had to wait (*impatiently*), and Shirley and I felt that this was good for them.

We had all gone back to the dining-room, and had given Sir John the details of our sport, to which he listened with a twinkle in his eye.

'You did very well, in my opinion,' said he.

'I'm sorry we cannot share that opinion,' remarked his daughter; 'but come, papa, is it not time for the oracle to speak? I see you have finished dinner, and here,' she added, as she poured it out, 'is your first glass of port.'

Sir John nodded, and was just raising the glass to his lips, when a servant entered.

'The men have just come, if you please, Sir John,' he said.

'The men come!' cried Miss Maxwell, 'That means that they have brought a stag!' and she hurried out of the room, followed by the rest of the party. There, sure enough, lying outside in the moonlight was a 'stag of ten.'

'Bravo!' cried the ladies, clapping their hands.

'That's a fine stag, isn't it, Sandy?' said her ladyship.

'Deed an' it's no a bad beastie, milady,' answered the old stalker. 'It's a bonnie head, whateffer.'

'This for yourself, Sandie,' said Lady Maxwell, handing him a pound note, 'see that you and the men have a good supper—I never was so glad to see a stag brought home.'

Shirley gave me a nudge.

'We shall have to find the value of that note,' he whispered.

'Yes, and more too!' I replied. 'Never mind, it's a good finish to the day.'

Then we returned to the dining-room, and Sir John enjoyed his congratulations and port together.

'And now,' exclaimed Miss Maxwell, 'we will go with you to the smoking-room, and you must tell us all about it.'

'Very well,' replied Sir John, resignedly, 'I suppose I shall have no peace till I do.'

But nobody enjoyed hearing the story more than he did telling it, which, when he had his cigar under way, he did, as follows :—

'I made my way, as you know, soberly up to the tops, and we looked all the corries without finding a deer in any of them, till we came to the last. After a long spy with the glass,

Sandie slowly remarked, "I'm seein' a beast, but I canna rightly say if it's a stag or a hind." Then he pointed cautiously with his stick; "Do you see yon black stane, by the patch of green at the very bottom of the corrie, wast of the burn? Well, he's lying wi his head behind it."

'I soon picked him up with my glass, and there, sure enough, was a beast of some sort, but we could only see his hind quarters. As we lay watching him, however, he got up, and we saw that he was a stag; only a small one, indeed, but as he had horns—six points—and (here he patted his daughter's head, as she sat on a stool beside him) horns were in demand, and as I could see nothing else, I made up my mind to try for him. We had a long, difficult stalk, as we were obliged to go right down to the bottom of the glen, and work up the burn, for the stag was able to command the flats on either side of it. It was a rough bit of work, for we could hardly leave the shelter of the burn for a moment, and were obliged to scale the waterfalls, and wade through the pools, as best we might.

'This sort of thing went on till we had worked up to within about 250 yards of the stag, who was quietly feeding, but there the bushes came to an end, and the banks were so low, that it seemed impossible to get any nearer. To the right, the ground was broken, and we might perhaps have succeeded in reaching the shelter of a bank, by crawling like snakes through the heather, but the wind would not allow of this. Even as it was, we feared that a flaw of air curling round from the back of the corrie might give the stag our wind.

'Whilst we lay discussing the matter in whispers, Sandie gave me a nudge, and I heard his despairing mutter, "Oh dear they'll pit him off, they'll pit him off!" Then I saw that a lot of sheep, evidently disturbed, and travelling at a good pace, were coming round the shoulder of the hill to the right, and making straight for the corrie.

'We watched them anxiously, knowing that, if the deer took away in front of them, he must get our wind. But there was one chance for us, he might turn down the hill, and so come within shot. The sheep, however, behaved better, on this occasion, than those irrepressible muttons generally do, and took down the hill, before coming within sight of the deer.

"He'll no see them noo," whispered Sandie into my ear, "till they're too far frae him to do much harm."

'At this moment, however, they put up a wicked old bl ack-

cock, which came sweeping round the hill, exactly over the stag, who immediately threw up his head, and trotted to the top of a knowe, to see what was the matter. There he caught sight of the sheep, and, after watching them a minute, he turned slowly round, and trotted quietly along in front of us, then he stopped, and turned for another look.

“He’s over 200 yards from us, Sandie, but he’ll get our wind in a minute—what do you say—shall I take the chance?”

‘Before Sandie could reply, however, the stag gave a sudden start, as if some one had struck him, and the next instant was racing away, and turning rather up the hill, so as to leave the corrie as high as possible.

“Ay, ay! he got our wind right enoo,” said Sandie, aloud, as we moved from our cramped position, and sat down in the sun, squeezing all the water we could out of our clothes.

“The question is—what are we to do next?” said I, “we must get a stag somehow.”

“Here comes one of the shepherds,” answered Sandie, “’twas he that pit the sheep off, he may have seen deer.”

‘The man, who had a couple of collies with him, soon came up to us, and, after accepting a nip of whiskey, held a conversation with Sandie in Gaelic, after which the latter said to me: “The shepherd was seein’ some hinds joost above the Black Wood, a while ago, an’ they fed doon among the patches at this end of the wood, and there was a stag there, for he heard him roarin’.” Then—after a pause—“Noo, I think if Sir John wad tak’ his old pass by the burn above the patches, we might drive this end of the wood; the wind wad serve fine, and the shepherd could come wi us.”

“Very well,” I answered, “that seems our best chance, I will take the rifle, and make my way to the pass at once, you can pick up Donald at the bottom of the glen, and Hugh McLachlan will be there with the cart by this time—he can leave that at the shepherd’s hut, below the Black Wood, and help you to beat.”

‘Off started Sandie and the shepherd with long swinging strides down the hill, whilst I went slowly along the face till I came in sight of the wood we were to try. Then I had a good spy with the glass, but no deer were in sight, so I reached my pass, lit my pipe, and made myself comfortable, as I knew I had some time to wait. I had not sat there long, before I was startled by a rushing noise just above me, and, on looking up,

saw a golden eagle sweeping away towards the glen below ; he must have passed right over my head—a splendid fellow, I don't think I have ever been so near one before. After about half an hour's waiting, I saw the men crossing the burn at the bottom, and taking up the hill towards the middle of the wood, so I pulled the rifle out of its case, and got ready. Still, for what seemed a long time, I heard nothing ; but the wood is broad, and the ground terribly rough, so I knew it would take them some time to get to their places.

'Then, at last, came a shout from Sandie, which told me that the drive had begun, and the cry was answered, at intervals, by the other men, as they worked slowly along. For some time I saw nothing, but then a general chorus of shouting showed that something was on foot, and directly afterwards I got a glimpse of deer amongst the patches.

'Now was the critical moment ; if they took up the hill, they were almost certain to cross the flat easily commanded from my pass, but they might elect to go down to the burn and away over the march. This, as I afterwards heard, was probably their first intention ; but the shepherd and his dogs had kept well forward along the bottom, and directly the deer showed themselves they met with such a hullabaloo, that they stopped dead for a moment, and then, seeing the dogs between them and the burn, turned right up. I could see their red bodies every now and then, as they threaded their way through the patches, but had not, as yet, been able to make out a stag—another moment, and half-a-dozen hinds cantered slowly across the flat, still no stag ! I began to think he must have turned back through the beaters, and had almost given up hope, when he appeared on the flat as suddenly as a ghost, and trotted slowly across with his tongue out. He had evidently paused for a moment behind the last patch of wood to have a look round, and, being fat and lazy, the steep hill, up which he had travelled fast, had pumped him.

'Old hand as I am, I must confess that I was suffering slightly from "stag-fever" as I pulled the trigger, but I could hear the thud of the bullet, and knew he had got it somewhere.

'He went on, however, without showing any signs of having been hit, and, as he plunged down into a hollow just as I gave him the second barrel, I fired over him with that. I re-loaded, and sat tight till the beaters came up (it's always best to do that, recollect, put in Sir John, as he looked at Shirley and me),

there might have been another stag, and also a wounded deer will often lie down at once, if he is not followed, and perhaps get too weak to move, whereas, if he sees any one after him, he will go till he drops.

‘The men soon came running up in a great hurry.

“Did ye nae get him, Sir John?” asked Sandie, with some reproach in his voice, as he saw me sitting quietly in the pass, and no sign of a stag anywhere.

“I hope to get him soon,” said I, “for I hit him, I know. Now, Sandie, do you come with me, and the rest of you sit here for a bit; if we want you, we’ll whistle.”

“Now, go cannily, Sandie,” I continued, as we moved off together, “I saw him last, going over that knowe, and here I took him with the first barrel.”

“And here’s blood!” cried Sandie, stooping down; “he’ll be a heavy beast enoo, look here! and here again!” he added, pointing to the track, which was that of a good stag.

“Crawl you now, to where you can get a look up over the hill, without showing yourself,” said I.

‘He did so, and in a few minutes I saw him crouching low in the heather, and beckoning me to join him.

“I’m seeing him noo,” said Sandie, softly, as I crawled up to him, “he’s standin’ and lookin’ this way, but he’s vara sick, I’m thinkin’.”

‘He pulled his head back, so that I could put my eye to the glass. Just as I picked him up the stag began to move on again, but very slowly.

“Give him time,” said I, “he’ll lie down directly, if I’m not mistaken.”

‘The stag soon paused again, and gave another long look back, but, seeing no enemy, walked slowly down into a hollow, and was out of sight. Then we followed him, and stalked carefully up to the place where he had disappeared, but deuce a bit of him could we see anywhere. Just beyond the hollow was a small burn.

“He’s lyin’ somewhere in yon burn,” whispered Sandie, “we must have seen him had he crossed.”

‘Close to the edge of the burn there was long heather, and a few clumps of birch trees—the burn itself was almost dry—just a trickle of water coming down. As we moved cautiously along, I felt a pressure on my arm, and Sandie pointed to a tiny pool at our feet; it was tinged with blood!

'At this moment, there was a rattle in the burn not twenty feet from us, and out of a hole in which one would hardly have thought he could have hidden himself rose the stag. He made a couple of plunges, but was too weak to leave the burn, and in another moment I put him out of his pain, with a bullet behind the shoulder.

"See! here is my first shot!" I exclaimed, as we stood beside him—"a little too far back."

"'Deed, remarked Sandie, as he examined the wound, "he might have travelled a long way with that, whilst he kept warm."

'He quickly galloped the deer, and the other men, who had come to the shot, got him down to the bottom of the hill, but only just in time to save the night. I was glad to take the cart, and return by the road, and, as I was determined to get the stag home to-night, the men borrowed a pony from Mitchell of Stroan, whose farm-house was not far off.'

'And now, gentlemen,' continued Sir John, as he looked at Shirley and me, 'I dare say the ladies will tell you what sizes they take.'

'You need not have been *quite* so hard on us,' said I to Miss Maxwell. 'You see you've got your gloves, after all.'

'No thanks to you!' was the reply, 'and we should never have forgiven you for missing those five birds, if the match—Stag *versus* Bag—had ended in a draw.'

THE PRODUCTION OF POLO PONIES.

By 'TRIVIATOR.'



HE princely pastime of polo, introduced into the United Kingdom about twenty-five years ago by the 10th Hussars and the 9th Lancers, has taken deep root in the land of its adoption, and is already able to send forth colonies into Europe, and even beyond the Atlantic—in fact, it may be said, to travesty an old tag of Latin famous in international law, '*ubi pony ibi polo*;' moreover, the game may be said to resemble the classical presentment of fame, for '*vires acquirit eundo*,' and in each recurring year the play grows faster and faster, till the perfect polo pony, ever sought for but rarely

found, requires something like the pace of a high-class chaser, the cool courage of a bull-fighter, combined with the handiness of a lady's-maid, and the capability of turning in a space not much larger than the railway turntable. To these requisites must be added quickness, docility, and insensibility to the blows of ball or stick that it may have to encounter in the course of the *mêlée*, together with a constitution of iron—in fact, the good polo pony must be like the great Prussian Chancellor, a combination of 'blood and iron.' If this be a tolerably fair statement of the *desiderata* in polo ponies, it will be evident to the most uninitiated that such animals must be rare, and for that reason very expensive. The old square-made charger who did duty in the polo field ten or twelve years ago is now as obsolete as the Flemish war horse, and their sharper or smaller brethren of the Manipuree stamp are no longer useful from their want of size, scope, weight, and galloping power. Hence, on the principle that the polo pony, like the poet, is a triumph of nature rather than a product of training and education, and that the old motto holds good here, '*Poeta nascitur non fit*,' efforts are being made to found pony farms, and to institute a polo pony stud book, where form can be seen at a glance, and the pretensions of the chargers destined to carry the champions of the game at Hurlingham, Ranelagh, and the Phoenix Park may be correctly gauged. Whether these experimental efforts at breeding suitable animals will prove a success or not remains to be demonstrated in the course of time and play; nor will any one attempt to gainsay the right of individuals to cater for the polo pony market. Polo men differ in this respect from *some*—nay, from many—racing men, who produce the stock argument on every possible occasion, that the turf tends to improve the breed of English horses (which assertion has certainly a germ of truth in it), for the former simply maintain that they play polo because they like it, and consider it a fine, manly form of exercise and excitement. The public, however, have a perfect right to speculate upon the effects of anything like extensive efforts at breeding polo ponies, and the influence of such efforts on the national stock of horse kind. These we think anything but beneficial to the commonweal. A well-bred, fourteen-hand pony must be looked upon as an *accident* in breeding—a *misfit*, in point of fact, which had little value till the polo pastime caused it to be sought after, and enhanced its price several hundred per cent. No breeder would like to see potential polo

ponies among his colts and fillies, and he would be inclined to cast a mare that constantly threw such equine eccentricities. Size and scope have been the aim and object of English breeders of high-class stock for the past hundred years, and, as a matter of fact, we know by the records of our cavalry that the standard has been raised about a hand within the century. Regiments in the eighteenth century were mounted in many cases on what we should now consider galloways, from the difficulty of getting together a sufficient number of troopers of the sixteen-hand pattern. We do not mean to insinuate that these galloways did not do their work adequately and efficiently. Perhaps in some respects, such as hardiness and endurance, they are quite equal to our modern war-horses, but experience has taught us that—*cæteris paribus*—large horses are better and have more capacity than small ones, and it therefore seems something like putting the hands of our equine clocks back to attempt to dwarf the standard, and breed Lilliputians instead of animals of the Brobdiagnagian pattern.

It will, therefore, be apparent, we would venture to think, that anything like an attempt to breed polo ponies on an extensive scale is against public policy or the increase of the commonweal; for, putting aside the select squadrons of polo players—a *corps d'élite* we admit—what are polo ponies worth in market overt for harness or saddle, and would not a 'pony' literally represent their average value? while for national purposes, for which horses are now 'registered' all over the country, they would be of infinitesimal account, and not to be compared to the cohort of cobs that are annually provided for the new arm of the service—the mounted infantry; for their gifts and graces of quality and speed, if not allied to considerable substance, would be against their use for troops. 'The failure' of the training stable, who proves unequal to competitions on the flat, over sticks, or across country, is, as a rule, a very useless, unprofitable, and unsaleable creature, who may or may not find a career in a hansom cab, where, according to Mr. Labouchere (*vide Truth*), he may recognise fallen greatness in *ex-Derby winners*—Mr. Labouchere not being aware, perhaps, that a Derby winner, no matter how poor a representative of that class, has an intrinsic value of several thousand pounds for stud purposes, at home or abroad. The polo pony failure would be even more unprofitable than this blue-blooded beast, whose performance is unequal to his pedigree pretensions. Every

year fresh secrets of nature are disclosed to patient, plodding, and scientific observation; but still, we fear, many of the mysteries of breeding are still unrevealed. Virgil, in his *Georgics*, showed us that he knew a good deal about horses and rural life, and declared that it would be the ambition of his existence to read the book of nature currently and freely:—

‘ Sin has ne possim naturæ accedere partes
Frigidus obstiterit circa præcordia sanguis
Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes
Flumina amem, sylvasque inglorius !’

Now it is to be feared that even our experts find the chapter of breeding in nature's volume—more especially that of horses—a very difficult one to master, seeing that even sensible men acknowledge that with all their pains there is much of the lottery luck about it. How many failures are there before a Cloister can be produced? By how many fiascoes is a Ladas counterbalanced? Hence we are of opinion that stud farms, no matter how scientifically managed, will hardly raise the standard of the polo pony, who, as a rule, *is the accident of many accidents*. That this is rather a matter of fact and history than a speculative opinion, the chronicle of polo during the past decade or so proves abundantly. Mr. John Watson, the Master of the Meath hounds, who is certainly among the best exponents of the game in the United Kingdom, and who has got the highest prices for ponies, *has hardly ever owned* or played a thoroughbred pony, and Fritz, who was associated with some of his greatest triumphs, was only a *very-well-bred cocktail*.

I read, not long ago, an advertisement in a sporting paper of much vogue, stating that a certain dealer *imported thoroughbred ponies from Ireland*. I think it possible, though hardly probable, that he may have had such animals in his possession at rare intervals, but the stud book confutes all such claims to pure pedigree, and if polo ponies have had a stronger infusion of blue blood in their veins during the past decade, they are one and all far removed from the thoroughbred standard; and at the moment we can recall nothing thoroughbred of the polo type in Ireland save Watchspring, a sire in the West of Ireland, who never was a polo pony, *but rather a dwarf racehorse*.

The pedigrees of Irish *horses* require authentication much

more than those of *ponies*, for in the warm imagination of their owners and breeders *classiness* is erroneously interpreted into *pur sang*. Whence come our polo ponies? The great sources of supply a few years ago was the west and north-west of Ireland, and, indeed, the island of Achill, which the recent disaster has brought so prominently before the world, was the birthplace of many who have figured in the Phoenix Park and at Hurlingham; the scant herbage to be found there and the Atlantic storms having done something towards stunting their development, just as they dwarf trees and shrubs in these wind-swept latitudes. Cushendal, another great pony centre, has also contributed its quota, while Exmoor, Wales, and the New Forest have also combined to swell the ranks. In all these places, though there was a fair share of Eastern blood infused, there was also much alloy; and hardship was probably the reason that these animals grew up *ponies* instead of *horses*, having been from early colthood *malo assueti*. A few good ponies have come from Texas and other parts of America, Jamaica has contributed a few, while Barbs and Arabs have done the polo state good service; indeed, the 5th Lancers achieved most of their successes in the polo lists by means of Barbs, and it would be no easy matter to trace the pedigrees of any of these animals.

Pæans of praise have been sung over ponies, some of which are no doubt miracles of strength and activity! for instance, in the present season the best jumper at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, was a pony, much under fourteen hands, who could almost have walked under his rival Snowdon, Lord Portarlington's champion; but, having said all this in his favour, what was his practical value? save perhaps for a small boy's hunter! So high-class polo ponies are of great value to a small *coterie* of players, and to them only. The wicked flea is probably the best jumper and the most active animal that we know of; but, though 'industrious' and docile to a certain extent, their propagation is hardly to be considered a matter of general interest.

If polo was certain to prove a perennial pastime, and a joy for ever, the extensive breeding of polo ponies might be desirable, and a lucrative investment of capital; but already there are signs of some waning in the interest taken in polo. *Its life is the army*, and especially the cavalry branch; but its military life is threatened both at home and abroad on the score of expense, and it is hard to say what decision will be come to by

the authorities at the Horse Guards on the subject. A mannikin is a dwarf, who is sometimes gifted with extraordinary powers, but the increase of dwarfs is hardly desirable in the general interest; while if one theory that semi-starvation and early exposure have been potent factors in the history or development of polo ponies, the absence of these stunting causes will tend to assimilate them more to horses and galloways. We confess we await the development of the *Polo Pony Stud Book* with some curiosity! Possibly, after a few years, their members may be justified in exclaiming in the words of Tommy Moore—

‘Sure never were seen such wonderful Ponies!
Other horses are clowns, but these Macaronies!’

‘*Qui vivra verra*,’ but we confess to some little scepticism as to whether its pages will contain the pedigree and performance of a better animal than Fritz.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE O. B. H.

By ‘YELLOWPLUSH.’

IT was refreshing to the writer of this article, who has known the Old Berkeley—or, as they are popularly termed, the O. B. H.—from his very earliest boyhood—even since the days of Lord Lonsdale (grandfather or great-uncle of the present peer) and Jim Morgan, indeed—to read amongst the hunting notices in the *Sporting Life* of February 1st that, meeting at Newberries, probably their most favourite fixture, they found in Coombe Wood, a good-sized covert belonging to the adjacent ‘Porter’s’ estate, and enjoyed one of the best runs that has been seen in Hertfordshire for a long time past.

Pointing for Mimms, to which place he probably belonged, the fox turned back through High Canons to Dereham Park, taking them thence over a good grass country to Barnet Gate, Moat Mount, and Totteridge—a good nine-mile point. The account does not say if they killed or not, so we can only hope they did, if only for the hounds’ sake.

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Newberries was visited by the hounds, and probably is still, regularly once a month, owing to the fact that it comes within the limits of the Hertfordshire as well as the O. B. H., the rival packs taking it on alternately ; and, as in old days its famous gorse usually held a fox, it was, as we have before remarked, a favourite meet.

When the writer first knew Newberries it belonged to Captain Phillimore, of the Grenadier Guards, who, however, was seldom there, and who, though a first-rate sportsman in other ways, did not care for fox-hunting, though always glad to see the hounds when they came. His father, a dandy of the old school, on the contrary, hunted regularly, and though not by any means a hard rider—on the contrary, we have heard it said that he very seldom went further than the meet—he had the reputation of being one of the best ‘turned-out’ sportsmen that ever put in an appearance at the covert side.

Captain Phillimore, in 1858, let Newberries for a term to the late Mr. M. T. Bass, M.P., the great brewer of Burton-on-Trent. Mr. Bass, who was as keen about fox-hunting as he was about the sister sports, shooting and fishing, had always been accustomed, when at home in Staffordshire, to entertain the Meynell Hunt at a hunt breakfast. When he came to Newberries, therefore, he proceeded to exercise his hospitality—always very great—quite as a matter of course, and the first morning the O. B. H. met there ‘open house’ was the order of the day. Alas! he quickly found out the difference between Mr. Meynell Ingram’s field and Lord Maldon’s.

The fame of the hunt breakfast got wind, with the result that the next time Newberries was the fixture such a mob put in an appearance—horse, foot, and artillery—as had never been known before. Not content with bringing themselves, many of the sportsmen hailing from the land of Cockaigne actually drove down from town accompanied by their wives, and their sisters, and their cousins, and their aunts. Mr. Bass, in his good nature, probably did not in the least object to this ; but, some of the London gentry in the course of the morning taking more champagne than was good for them, and otherwise making themselves objectionable, he wisely determined in future to slightly limit his hospitality.

Mr. Bass himself (who, by the way, was a first-rate horseman, as is his son, Mr. Hamar Bass, now Master of the

Meynell Hunt) we always looked upon as quite a picture of an old-fashioned sportsman, with his snow-white hair, and the slim, wiry figure attired in the double-breasted, swallow-tailed scarlet. He must have been as hard as nails, too. We certainly never saw any man eat so little, and he drank less. When at home he would be up at seven in winter, take a sippet of bread and a cup of tea, transact business for a couple of hours, and then, mounting his hack, gallop off to some distant meet. Out shooting he would go all day without touching anything at all. And what a good plucked one he was!

Driving home all alone in his brougham one foggy night from Burton-on-Trent, he suddenly became aware, from the plunging of the horses and the rushing of water into the carriage, that his coachman, confused by the fog, had driven into the canal. An unpleasant situation enough, in all conscience, and one which would have frightened many men out of their senses. Not so Mr. Bass, who, never losing his 'stupidity' for a moment, promptly opened the door of the brougham, and striking out reached dry land safely, and, what is more, performed the feat *without letting his cigar out*, a fact that spoke volumes for the Member for Derby's nerve.

Yet another instance. Mr. Bass and the writer's father were shooting partridges together one day in Hertfordshire, when a bird shot by the former towered and fell on the other side of the hedge which divided them from some one else's land, and was promptly picked up by a burly young rustic.

'Jump over and ask him for it,' said Mr. Bass, always with an eye to the 'bag,' to an under-keeper.

Over went the man, and by-and-by, after a parley, came back with the intelligence that Tummas declined to give his 'treasure trove' up.

'Oh! he won't, won't he?' was the calm reply; and the next instant, with a 'hold my gun,' the beer king had clambered over the fence, and with clenched fists was facing the offending Tummas.

'You have no business to keep that partridge. Do you intend to give it up quietly? If not, I shall make you.'

Tummas was a judge of character. He didn't like the determined tone in which he was being addressed. He liked less the

menacing look in the other's face. So he gave up the partridge without a word, and was probably not comforted by Mr. Bass's parting remark, as he leapt lightly back over the fence with his quarry—namely, that had he (Tummas) given up the bird in the first instance he would have presented him with a shilling for himself.

Brimming with life and energy, generous to a degree, and always as full of fun as a schoolboy, it is no wonder that Michael Thomas Bass should have been beloved, as he undoubtedly was, by both high and low. One thing is very certain, which is, that his reign at Newberries was all too short, and, what is more, there has never yet been found a successor worthy of the name.

When Lord Lonsdale (who we remember as an elderly gentleman always dressed in black and sporting brown tops) retired from the Mastership of the Old Berkeley, Lord Maldon, eldest son of the Earl of Essex, stepped into his shoes, Goddard Morgan, son of the celebrated Jim of that ilk, carrying the horn; and we don't think we are very wide of the mark in saying that a more popular Master the country never had. The farmers in that part of the world are none too sporting, and they like beyond everything a 'swell,' and that they got in my lord.

'We like Lord Maldon,' said a non-hunting farmer in our hearing one day, 'because, you see, *we know who he is and all about him.*'

Goddard Morgan was, perhaps, not the most scientific huntsman in the world, but his horsemanship was quite perfection. We always thought that his talents were thrown away upon a slow country like that of the Old Berkeley, and that his proper sphere would have been as huntsman to a pack of staghounds, where his riding could have had full play. We can see him now handing his horse over a drop into one of the Hertfordshire lanes as if it was the easiest thing in the world.

There were some good men, too, hunting with the pack in those days. Mr. Cobb, for instance, was one who could have held his own in any country. Mr. Sydney Wilson, who, with his feather weight and good horses, ought to have been ashamed of himself if he did not see the way they went. Messrs. George Rooper, Harvey, Fellowes, Holt, Samuda, Charles and William Longman (the former as enthusiastic a fox-hunter as it would

be possible to find), Mr. Solley of Serge Hill, Captain Ramsay, Messrs. Baxendale and Soames from the Hertfordshire; not forgetting the eccentric William Capel from Kytes, probably the best sportsman of the whole lot, mad as he was, and by no means the worst horseman.

The writer's father, riding to a point one day after the hounds had found, arrived there before the fox, and, seated on his cob, waited the result. The principal actors in the drama arrived in the following order:—The fox, 1; hounds, 2; Goddard Morgan, 3; William Capel, 4; the field at intervals. William Capel was as eccentric in his habits as ever Jack Myttom was, and we could almost fill a book with stories of his sayings and doings.

The writer once helped him to shoot his coverts in the middle of July—only for rabbits, of course—and on another occasion drove over to Kytes before daylight on a December morning to shoot his pheasants, he declaring that the keeper on the adjoining estate (Munden) was wont to come round early in the morning with a retriever and drive his (William Capel's) birds off into his own woods. On these occasions breakfast invariably consisted of tea and captain's biscuits, a diet which did not suit our complaint at all. His taking a fancy to bathe in the river one day, and then run round the field in a state of nature in order to dry himself, in full view of two old maiden ladies whose house overlooked the scene, and who were shocked beyond expression, was nothing, as Mr. Toole would say.

One anecdote he himself related to us with great glee, and which, knowing the man, we quite believe, was highly characteristic. In former days they were much more strict about evening dress at the Opera than now. When, therefore, William Capel presented himself at Her Majesty's with his lower limbs encased in a pair of nankeen inexpressibles, the attendants promptly refused him admission to the stalls. William was quite equal to the occasion. Repairing to the nearest slop shop, he purchased a pair of black trousers, which he drew on over the nankeens, went back to the Opera house, was duly admitted to the stalls, and once there deliberately proceeded to divest himself of his black overalls, to the astonishment, we should imagine, of his neighbours.

He invariably appeared at the Hatfield Ball in a scarlet dress coat, and in the course of the evening would produce from his



A Drop into a Hellish Day's Work.

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pocket a small medicine bottle full of sherry, making at the same time sundry remarks not at all complimentary to the quality of the vintage supplied by the Marquis of Salisbury for the benefit of his guests.

We may here remark that, whatever the quality of the Hatfield sherry, it could not have been worse than that consumed by William Capel under his own roof tree, for he was noted for his bad wine, always buying cheap champagne, claret, &c., a fact of which his friends were fully aware, and abstained from touching accordingly.

One more anecdote and we have done. Driving to Kytes from Watford late one night in a hired fly, he opened the door and slipped out when not far from home, and, taking a short cut, reached his home some minutes before the fly. Down got the flyman and rang the bell. Out came the butler. 'What do *you* want?'

'Want? Why, I've brought Mr. Capel home from the station, to be sure!'

'Master! Why he's been in bed this half-hour, man!'

The indignant driver opened the door of the fly. No one there, of course; and at that moment, to further mystify the Jehu, downstairs came William Capel himself in his dressing-gown to know what the matter was.

A well-known character in the town was Mr. Robins, of Watford, commonly called 'Cock Robin,' and a sort of Jorrocks in his way. Not long after his death the hounds one day ran their fox to Leavesden and killed him in the churchyard.

Now, poor old Cock Robin was buried there, and some one suggested that it would be very appropriate to break up the fox over his grave, a proposition seconded by his son, who observed it was just what his father would have liked *if he had been alive*. Broken up the fox was accordingly over Cock Robin's grave, to the accompaniment of much horn-blowing and who-hooping. The Vicar of the parish, when, like Billy Taylor's Captain, 'he came for to hear on't,' was intensely indignant at the desecration of his churchyard, and, if we remember rightly, wrote to Lord Maldon on the subject.

The sporting farmers of the hunt *par excellence* in those days were the veteran Ben Toovey, Messrs. John Purrott and Selby; the latter, especially on his good chestnut horse, never to be denied when hounds were running. Then a constant attendant at the meets of the Old Berkeley, within measurable reach of

St. Albans, was old Harry Oldaker, a former huntsman to the pack. The hunt steeplechases, too, looked up in Lord Maldon's time, and one especially good meeting we remember, held at Chorleywood, when Captain Henry Coventry, who had just previously won the Grand National on Alcibiade, rode for Lord Maldon. Colonel Harford, too, we fancy, performed also. When, to the regret of everybody, Lord Maldon retired, Mr. Charles Barnes, of Chorleywood, assumed the reins of management. He was hardly, however, the right man in the right place, and his reign was not a long one.

Goddard Morgan did not stay very long with the Old Berkeley after Lord Maldon's departure, going to the Bramham Moor, and after him the pack seems to have been but indifferently hunted for a while.

There is a good story about one huntsman they had. The hounds were supposed to be drawing a covert, and the principal ride was full of followers of the hunt, all listening with eager expectancy, for 'voices in the wood,' proclaiming a fox on foot, when to their surprise, the huntsman suddenly appeared in their midst, without a hound near him. General chorus of subscribers: 'Where are the hounds?'

Huntsman (with the voice of a bacchanal): 'Where are they?' (hiccup) 'Thatsh jeswarriwantt'know, pretty dears!' (Tableau.)

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.

TWO very cheerful landscape photogravures have recently been published by Messrs. Fores of Piccadilly. Their quotation titles are respectively, '*When leaves are dead and woods are red*,' and '*O'er wood and wold and softly swelling hills*.' Trickling through the centres of these pleasant autumnal English scenes are to be seen devotees of the chase in full cry, to which the eye is for the moment naturally attracted, anon to be engrossed by the natural beauties of the scenes. They are taken from pictures painted by Mr. A. C. Havell.

The portrait of Ladas, winner of the 2000 Guineas and

Derby, has also been produced by the aforesaid firm, from a painting by Mr. A. C. Havell, in continuation of their Series of Celebrated Winners. The likeness is faithful, and will doubtless find a nook in the homes of many lovers of the turf, not only for its own sake, but for that of its popular owner.

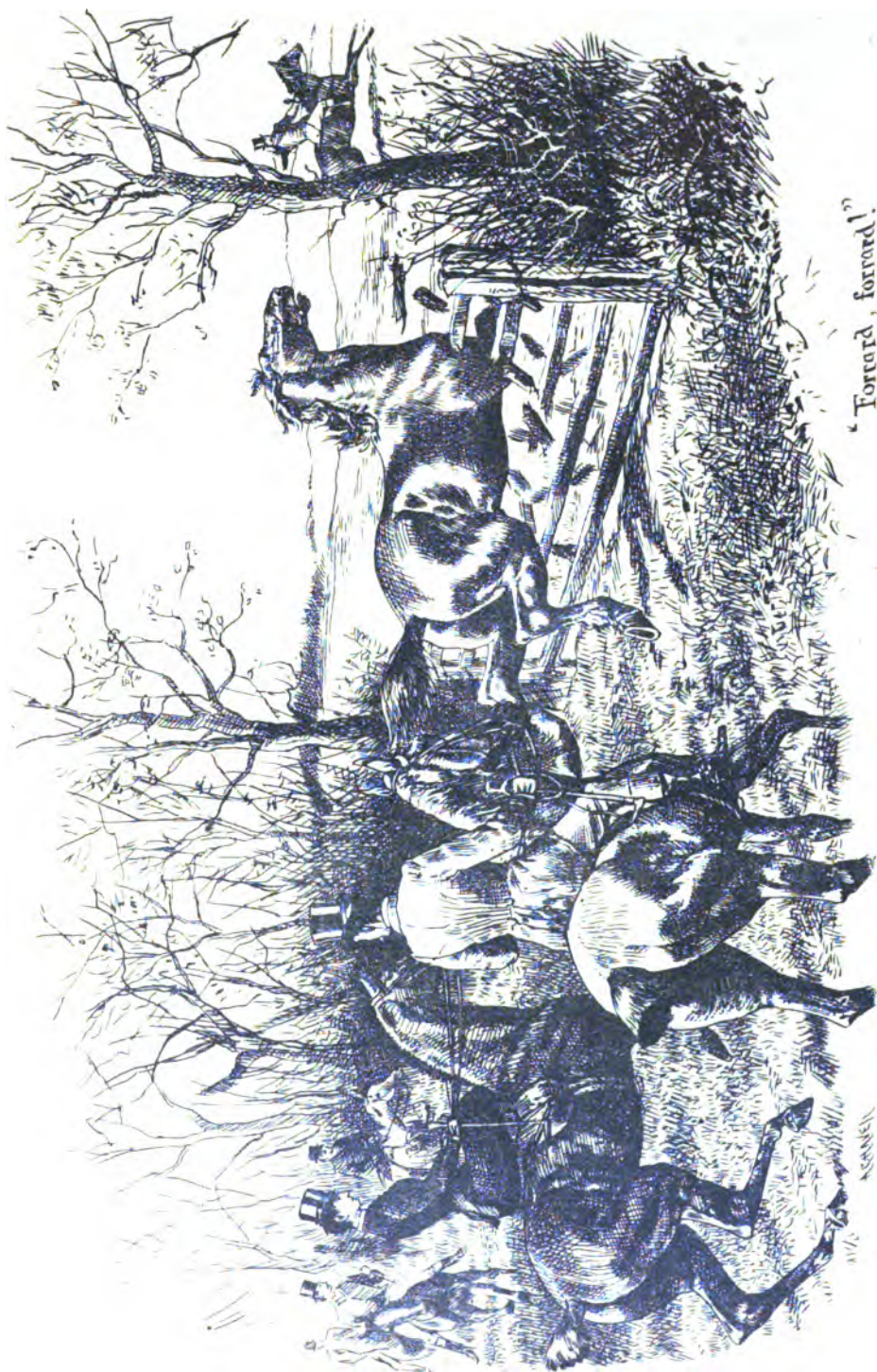
The rapidly increasing number of sportsmen who have fallen victims to the wondrous enchantment of hitting a little white gutta-percha ball with a stick, armed as occasion requires with a wooden or iron head, will be highly amused with Mr. W. Ralston's book, entitled *North Again, Golfing this time*. From the start (where our three travellers in a railway carriage are seen startled by the advent of a golf ball crashing through the window, accompanied by the cool remark of 'the only other passenger,' 'We're no' faur frae the station noo") to the finish of the tour (where our friends have succumbed to 'The Dew off Ben Nevis') the score or more of sketches with appropriate letterpress in this bright and humorous little book are charmingly crisp and clever. Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, & Co., are the London publishers; John Menzies & Co., Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Thames and Tweed by George Rooper (Sampson Low, Marston, & Co.) is now in its third edition, which has been revised and enlarged, and is, as may be imagined, devoted to fishing precepts, practices, and theories. It bristles with practical information, hints, and suggestions, while its style is essentially popular.

Not the least popular railway novel of the season will be the one containing the humorous sporting adventures of Mr. Flopkin as related by Mr. George F. Underhill in a brightly written volume, which he has entitled *The Helter-skelter Hounds*. It must not be inferred hunting alone is treated of, as we have all the fun generally to be enjoyed at a sporting country mansion, including the usual passages of arms between the sexes, in this case eventuating most satisfactorily in a double wedding. Chapman & Hall are the publishers.

In continuation of 'The Fur and Feather Series' of popular-priced volumes of sport, Longmans, Green, & Co. have just issued the second one, devoted to *The Grouse*, which will be found at least as interesting to gunners as the first of the series, which dealt with *The Partridge*. The same gentlemen are responsible for the contents—viz., the Rev. H. A. Macpherson, the Natural History section; A. J. Stuart-Wortley, the sport of Shooting; while Cookery is explained by George Saintsbury; and the whole is ably edited by Alfred E. T. Watson. The illustrations by A. J. Stuart-Wortley and A. Thorburn have been reproduced with great refinement.

Under the heading of *Diana's Diversion* Messrs. Fores, of Piccadilly, have produced a very taking set of four coloured prints of ladies in the hunting field, from the spirited pencil of G. H. Jalland. '*Now then, stupid! what are you doing?*' is addressed by a fair amazon to her mount, who is unmistakably pecking on landing over a small fence. Another lady, upon finding her horse disposed to refuse at a 'post and rails,' is admonishing with spur and thong and a '*Get along, you old rascal!*' Quite a young lady, with fair, flowing hair, mounted on a thoroughbred chesnut, is turning her head and apparently replying to a word of paternal warning, while she is cramming her steed at a brook, with '*All right, pa! we can both swim!*' In the fourth and last of the series is seen a fair girl on a slapping grey in the foremost flight, and going strong; that she is 'to the manner born' and enjoying herself to her heart's content may safely be assumed from her exclamation, '*Oh, what a time we are having!*' Nothing is more likely to take the fancy of lovers of sport than these brightly coloured and charming subjects.



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SPORTING NOTES AND SKETCHES.

MANY HAPPY RETURNS OF THE DAY.

By GUY GRAVENHIL.

'Tis the first of November, our opening day.'

THE first of November. Yes, surely a red-letter day
in the Calendar.

'I am old, I am old, and my eyes are grown weaker,
And my beard is as white as the foam on the sea,
Yet pass me the bottle and fill me a beaker.
A bright brimming toast in a bumper for me.
O glory of youth! consolation of age!
Sublimest of ecstasies under the sun!
Tho' the veteran may linger too long on the stage,
Yet he'll drink a last toast to a foxhunting run.'

So wrote one, whose bright spirit has, alas! now crossed 'the unjumpable Styx,' of which he sang in the stirring poem, from which these lines are culled.

I, too, am old. But have not I, too, drunk delight of battle with my peers, where the Whissendine, 'that stream of historic disaster,' winds its dread course through the broad Leicestershire pastures; where the Creslow flows 'sluggish and idle' down there in Aylesbury's classic vale, or where the stone walls loom large and forbidding on wolds, where Beaufort's Duke holds sway in that fair country of the West, looking out on the hills of Wales. Yes, I know them all, and many another besides, grass and plough, wood and wold, throughout the length and breadth

of Merrie England, the merits of whose hounds old Somerville sang in no uncertain tone.

'*Oh mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos!*' Old and hackneyed, no doubt, is the quotation, but what other can so well express my sensations, as I sit here half-dozing in my armchair in the twilight on this greatest day of the sportsman's year, waiting for my grandson's return with a well-filled budget of the episodes of the day. What would I not give to change places with him? or at least to jump back into those joyous days, before our eyes had grown dim, our nerve lost its edge, or our right hand its cunning, and to be even now charging side by side with him, where hounds are running their hardest over the cream of our grass with never a covert within five miles?

Ah, well! we thought we could do the trick once, so now let the young ones have their turn too.

Thus we sit and dream, while our thoughts turn, half sadly, back to bygone heroes of the chase. Names to conjure by, so we thought, with an imperishable niche in the temple of fox-hunting fame. Where are they now? Gone! Yes, gone every one of them, and their very names may ere long be forgotten by a younger generation, who may even (save the mark) vote them slow, fossils, old fogies, what not, in an age even more rapid than this.

But they were giants in our day, and before that even, fossilised fogey tho' we be. What could equal our admiration for the Tedworth Squire,

'Tom Smith, the lion-hearted.

Where grew the fence, where flowed the stream,
Could baffle him when started?'

For Sir Richard in the palmy days of his triumphs; for the cheery, hard-riding Oxfordshire Squire, delight of every Under-graduate's sporting soul; and, going back still farther, for *the* Squire himself, whose name is a household word, indeed; and still farther to the very root of the tree, the father of foxhunting, the great Hugo Meynell himself?

The room grows darker and darker, the fire has smouldered down, till it looks like a huge glowworm in the gathering gloom, and our eyes are heavy. Are we asleep? We think not, but we never heard any one enter, and yet opposite to us, in the armchair, covered by our favourite hunter's chesnut hide, sits a figure, old, gray, and hoary, clad in the hunting garb of a day

gone by. We gaze steadfastly into one another's eyes for a while, and at last my unknown guest opens his mouth and speaks.

'Do you know me?' he asked, in a deep, mellow voice, which somehow seemed to thrill through me and to touch some answering chord. 'I have been by your side through life. I was with you but now, though you knew it not. I shall be with you and never leave you, till the breath leaves your body, and you may even then acknowledge "the ruling spirit strong in death." I am the embodiment of the spirit of foxhunting. I heard you but now in your thoughts recalling bygone days and bygone worthies. They are gone, indeed—gone beyond recall, and with them a great part of the spirit which animated them. My own time, too, is coming. I thought to be immortal, but I know too well that I am fast tottering towards extinction. I am strong and vigorous as of yore—nay, stronger—but there is a worm at the core. My very vigour is overwhelming me; the blood rushes through my veins and threatens to surge up into my brain. My whole system is overcharged, and I know that my hour is come.'

'Speak plainly,' I murmured, 'that I may understand you. For of a truth the future of hunting seems fair enough to me.'

'In the days you spoke of,' the shape replied, 'men hunted from home. The field was small and select, and a bond of local union was around them all. My truest adherent, the farmer, pursued the chase himself, and the men who rode over his land, were men whom he himself had known from childhood. The men who followed the hounds, and they did follow them then (but I dare not think of it; it warms my heated blood almost to boiling pitch, and the fatal symptoms, which I told you of, warn me to desist), were every one of them versed in every detail of country life, and knew what entailed loss on their best friend, the farmer, as well as he. Moreover, they were each and all sportsmen in the truest sense of the word, and hunted for hunting's sake.

'Nowadays all this is changed. Three or four hundred men—ay, and women, too—more than half of them strangers in the land, flock to the meets in what are now termed fashionable countries for fashion's sake. Half of them hail from Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, or London—names that stink in my nostrils, and they know nothing and care less for rural matters or the arcana of the chase. Seeds are to them the same

as grass ; the tenderness of sprouting beans or peas is a thing to them unknown. Gates are left open, and stock get astray, while they make gaps like highways for a coach. And, worst of all, the honest farmer is treated almost as an interloper, and sometimes actually looked upon and spoken of with contempt. Small wonder if he looks upon the sport with disfavour, and exercises his ingenuity in devising means to prevent it. I hear of wire and rumours of wire, of foxes shot and trapped, even (shades of old Meynell!) of hounds themselves being poisoned and slain. Do you wonder when I say that I feel my end approaching, and that my prophetic spirit already discerns the day growing distinct in the vista of years, when the horn shall sound no more, when the opening hound shall no longer gladden the heart of impatient youth, when the last fox, sole remnant of a race as extinct as the dodo, shall take his appointed place in the Zoo, and my vexed spirit cease to pervade the land for evermore ?

‘Woe to England, dear land of thews and sinews, when the hunting-field, grand school for

‘The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill,’

shall be numbered with the things of the past, for I shall not fall alone. Vanished will be the boasted Rose of England, which now mantles proudly in every cheek ; vanished the bright, clear eye ; vanished the sinews braced in the mimic war of sport for the grim reality of battle and ‘war’s wild alarms’ ; and vanished, too, the manly spirit, which has placed England first on the muster roll of nations. What are men without leaders ? And is it not from the ranks of *my* votaries that you recruit the chieftains, who lead your troops to victory ? When my spirit has fled from its happy hunting grounds with what will you replace it ? When the descendants of my former votaries have flown to the capitals of the world to lead a life of luxury, when they have become a pale, weakly, nerveless, effete and effeminate race, who then will lead our armies to victory, when the enemy is at the gate ? They, too, may rise, like Samson from the scissors wielded by the white, shapely fingers of Delilah, and exclaim with him, “I will go out as at other times before” to find like him that nerve and strength alike are gone from them.’ He ceased.

‘Hallo, grandfather!’ I wake with a start. Then I *have* been asleep ! and dreaming ; but, oh ! what a nightmare !

Instead of the bloated figure and swollen features, which embodied the spirit of my dreamland visitor, I see the stalwart, active form, mud-bespattered boots and leathers, and stained pink, surmounted by the radiant face and clear, laughing blue eyes of my grandson.

'What did you do?' I ask, rubbing my eyes, and half fearing a return of my ghostly visitant.

'Such a clinker! Found directly in Shelton Spinnies, ran him a cracker without a check to near Brimsby Park, hit it off again to the left, ran hard down to the brook,—only Blazers of the Blues, Jerry Wilmington, Frank Hackthorn, a sporting farmer, the huntsman, first whip, and myself got over, and had hounds to ourselves for the next ten minutes, when they ran into him. Good enough for any one, and the young one never turned his head nor put a foot wrong from find to finish, and *you* know how blind the country is!'

A bald account, truly, though not without vigour, I think to myself, as I listen. But cannot I fill in the details?

The long, narrow spinny, the field massed in the road, Dick Prickhard standing up in his stirrups on the long, low, brown horse by the side of the covert, cheering his beauties, as they dash eagerly into the thick, tangled undergrowth.

'. . . . See how they range
Dispersed, how busily this way and that
They cross, examining with curious nose
Each likely haunt. . . .'

Here a blackbird, with bright yellow bill, shoots out from the hedge, uttering his shrill cry of alarm; there a rabbit pops out and in again, his scut gleaming brightly in the semi-gloom of the trees, while Bashful, in her first season, lashes her sides and looks longingly at him. 'Have a care, Bashful, have a care!' sings out Jim, while a crack from his ponderous thong echoes through the wood, and a jay flies screeching from the big yew-tree in the centre.

'A fox for a million!' exclaims my grandson, enthusiastically, as a deep note rings out confidant and true, and 'Hoick! to Rummager, hoick!' from Dick, proclaims him right, while 'Gone away, away, awa-a-ay!' from the corner, where 'Jack, the whip, in ambush lay,' passes like an electric shock through the serried ranks of eager horsemen, and the whole field is in motion. Look at Bashful! What a model for a painter's brush she

makes, as she stands with one forefoot slightly raised and head erect—

‘One second, ere, wild for the fun,
She is lashing along with the pace of a deer,
Her comrades to join in the run.’

Ah, well-beloved soul of Whyte-Melville, would you were here to-day in the flesh, as you may be, perchance, who knows, in spirit!

What different feelings that holloa has excited in different breasts!

Quot homines tot sententiæ. Tom Craner (I know it as well as if I had seen him) is fumbling for his flask. Will Funker is trembling from head to foot, while his heart sinks into his boots, while any number of his fellows are filled with a disagreeable feeling of doubt and uncertainty, diffidence and distrust. The mediums these. Not so my old friend, Squire Roadrider. He is off down the road, as hard as his horse's legs can carry him, on his way to gap and friendly bridle-gate, which will take him, as he knows full well, to the likeliest point for a fox to make, while no small contingent elect to follow him. But we will not, not we! Imagination is a flyer, no fence is too big for him, no pace too severe, and we hustle him round the covert in time to see Rummager dash over the fence, followed by Fearless and Dreadnought, Remus, Starlight, and Vengeance, and many another cheery comrade of the chase. See him fling for the scent, as he gallops into the open. Ah! he has it! and Dick's cheer sends yonder magpie chattering from his perch, gets the pack together, and away they stream, like pigeons on the wing. How they fling and drive, as they race up to the nearest hedge, and what a picture they make against the soft green of the lush November pastures; while overhead stretches that self-same expanse of soft, dreamy, gray sky, which we have seen and loved since the days of our hot youth, ‘when Plancus was consul,’ as my graceless grandson observes.

The hounds have settled to the scent now, and those who mean to live with them to-day have no time for dallying. A hundred men have started on even terms, but the first fence is rearing its haughty head, and already the ranks are breaking this way and that, to left and right, intent on gate or gap or follow-my-leader game. Twenty men are coming to the front; each one has picked his place, and scorns to swerve from it. Twenty hunters, jumping big and bold, have cleared it, and are



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sailing along in the pasture beyond. 'Landed, by Jove!' ejaculates every man of the little band, as his eyes rest on the hounds simply flying half way across the next field, almost mute, except for a sharp, whimpering cry, which betokens a burning scent.

'So twenty fair minutes they run and they race,
'Tis a heaven to some, 'tis a lifetime to all,'

till hounds throw up their heads close to the deer park at Brimsby, and, peering through the trees, I see the deer standing clustered together with heads erect, and, beyond the deer again, the old, gray, many-gabled mansion, with its blue smoke curling peacefully up from stack and chimney into the still, gray air.

But Rummager has hit it off, where the fox turned short down yonder hedgerow, and it will never do to 'stand dreaming, while yonder they're streaming.' An unjumpable fence into the next field confronts us, and the gate is locked, but Dick is at the gate and over it, while a loose cart colt comes tearing past us, essays to follow him, splinters every bar, and lets us through. 'Forrard, forrard!' screams Dick, as the pack gets together, and stream over the pastures beyond down to the brook. See how the hounds dash into the water, and, shaking their sides on the farther bank, send the spray flying in clouds; behind them are fifteen of the best men in England, charging side by side down to the stream, and in front of them is a combination of grace and symmetry encased in what was a bright coat of ruddy fur, but which is sadly stained and draggled now. The brook claims its due, as it always does. No Charon is more jealous of his fees than the river-god of a bumping brook after a twenty minutes' burst. Five refuse and three get in, while the seven survivors gallop grimly on. Most of us are crashing *through* the fences now as best we may, only Imagination can go on jumping big and clean after such a run as this. But a fox is but mortal, and a change has come over the hounds, as though some magician's wand had touched them. They are no longer running steadily on, but are racing one against the other, snarling and jealous, with their hackles rising from neck to stern in angry mood, and, fatal sign for their quarry, the *old ones* are gathering in the front.

Where now is thy pride, thou robber of hen-roosts? Surely vengeance is overtaking thee, in spite of thy cunning and fleetness of foot. Ah! I thought so. As we land in the great fifty-acre pasture we view him plodding wearily on; each foot feels

weighed down with a stone weight, as he lifts them high and stiff one after the other in his laboured course ; his tongue is hanging out baked and dry, while his long, knavish countenance betokens the extremity of distress. He struggles bravely on, but his troubles are nearly over. He turns at last, as he feels Rummager's hot breath on his flank, and, making his teeth meet in the veteran's knee, dies silent and grim, like the tough old freebooter he is.

'Who-whoop !' screams Dick, throwing himself off his horse.

'Who-whoop !' hollóas my grandson.

And I—who-whoop rises to my lips, and I wake from my reverie to find that my mount is only my old armchair and young Graceless is asleep opposite to me, while I rouse myself and toddle off to dress and dine, and drink Many Happy Returns of the Day to the Sport of Kings, the Image of War without its guilt.

JACK VEREKER'S GHOST.

By SIR RANDAL H. ROBERTS, Bart., Author of *Ridge and Furrow*, *Not in the Betting*, &c.

JACK VEREKER and I were at school and college together. In those dear old days we lived within a couple of miles of one another. We were bosom friends and sworn companions on all fishing, hunting, and shooting expeditions. Dear old Jack ! I think I see you now, with your bright face, cheery laugh, and handsome figure. Jack's father was a rich man, mine was poor—that was the only difference between Jack and I, that I can remember, in our boyhood's days. Little Daisy Morton was the only daughter of our Vicar, a good steady-going country parson, who rode to hounds like a workman, was captain of our village eleven—and a rare good one too, could throw a fly and shoot better than any man I can recollect, and I think I may say both Jack and I owe our early training in field sports mostly to him.

Daisy was the brightest little fairy in the world, and both Jack and I fell in love with her when we went to Harrow. At college I began to see that my chance, if Jack did love her, was very poor, with his broad acres and heavy banking account—for Jack's father died just before he left college, and so at

twenty-one Jack was in receipt of 10,000*l.* a year, whilst I was gazetted to a marching regiment with an allowance of a hundred a year and my pay. Fortunately for me, my regiment was under orders for India, where pay and allowances in those days enabled an officer in H. M. S. to live like a gentleman. I remember I came home on two weeks' leave before sailing for Bombay to say good-bye to my family, to the old Vicar, Daisy, and Jack.

It was summer time, we'd been playing tennis at the Vicarage; five o'clock tea was announced, and I lounged into the cosy hall, leaving Jack and Daisy out on the lawn. I chatted with the Vicar and his wife for some time, and then I went out to find the truants and say good-bye to Daisy. How my heart beat! I was not certain whether Jack loved her, but I soon learnt the truth—at least, I thought so. I found them under a large cedar—he had his arm round her; she, her face uplifted to his. My romance was over; what a fool I was to think I had any chance against Jack! But there was a strange tightening about my heart as I advanced, and a mist about my eyes as I shook Daisy's hand and whispered good-bye. Jack took me by the arm and we walked home together. We did not speak to one another; he was absorbed with his own thoughts, I was fretting and fuming at my terrible bad luck.

'Good-bye, Jack,' I said on the platform; 'good-bye, and—and—you'll take care of Daisy,' and I was gone before he could answer, but I saw his look of amazement as he stood on the platform. I never saw Jack again—except once.

* * * * *

I wish it to be clearly understood that Albert Forrester, which is the name I bear, Lieutenant in H. M. 133rd Regiment of Foot, has no belief in occultism, second sight, spirit rapping, or any of the *fin de siècle* beliefs in such supernatural matter; and yet in the face of what I am about to relate, I must confess to a wavering of opinion, an uncertainty of mind, which I cannot explain. If the reader is a disciple of any of the creeds above mentioned, doubtless either he or she will find a solution for what I am about to relate.

It is Christmas in India, and H. M. 133rd Regiment are quartered in the Ghoorpoorie lines, Poona, Bombay Presidency. I am lounging in the verandah of the messroom, thinking of the

jolly Christmas times I have spent at home—the pheasant shooting, the hunting, the three woodcock I shot in the laurels the day before Christmas one year, the family dinner-party, the servants' ball, the decoration of the church, when I used with Jack's assistance to help Daisy Morton to hang up the rich red berries of the holly, the delicate white ones of the mistletoe, and to nail up the long strings of evergreens, and so, of course, I thought of them.

'Married by this time, I suppose,' said I to myself, savagely chewing off the end of my unoffending cheroot. 'Haven't heard from Jack! funny, can't make it out. Here, boy idderow, brandy velaity pawin lao' (bring a brandy and soda).

'Hulloa, Bertie! another peg? I thought you had shut down on such things in India.'

'Oh! is that you, Quilp?' the nickname given to the smallest officer in the corps. 'Well, I was thinking of Christmas at home and old times. Christmas in India! ugh! beastly, isn't it?'

'Tis rather hard, Bertie,' he replied, throwing himself into a cane chair alongside of me; 'but I'll tell you what is going to be done. The Poona Hunt have determined to spend Christmas under canvas hunting the wild boar. I've just seen Duccat, the M. F. H., and he sent off the shikaries for "kubber" (news); better than nothing at all, isn't it?'

'Something to do, certainly; but I suppose I shall be on duty or on court-martial, or there'll be a field day or kit inspection, or goodness knows what; that's always my luck,' I replied.

'Well, you're wrong, Bertie, this time. The C. O. has, for once, considered our feelings, and the Adjutant told me any one can have a week's leave provided there's enough of us left to do the duty. Well, you know there's only about a dozen of "ours" who care for pig-sticking, so you'd better go and send in your application at once and get that jolly little bay horse of your's in readiness. I'm off to do the same.'

'Quilp's' allusion to the little bay put me in a good humour. I had bought him from the Line Sergeant, and so I called him 'Line Sergeant.' He was a clean-bred Arab, bay with black points, standing 14.2. I never saw the ground that little beggar couldn't get over at a cracking pace without putting a foot wrong, and I have never seen the bottom of him, either after an old boar, a lanky sow, a jackal, or a pariah. He was as honest as he was good to look at, so I went to my bungalow and, having

sent in my application, I commenced my preparations. I had a second horse in a flea-bitten grey Arab, who knew his work well, and a chestnut, 'Tat,' whose name was famous at the Gymkhana. I had my tent packed, one bullock trunk, charpoy, and bedding, some spears betipped with 'bodrag,' &c, and sent them later on with my horses to the rendezvous of the Poona Hunt, situated some fifteen miles off.

The arrangements of the Poona Hunt were as near perfection in those days as could be. Each member supplied his own tent and baggage, whilst the Hunt provided a large marquee as a mess tent, where breakfast, tiffin, and dinner was supplied under the direction of the secretary; and right well was the catering done, the liquor was excellent, and as it was Christmas Day when we arrived at the meet, we determined to make a night of it. When I entered the mess tent there were about twenty gathered round the table, amongst whom I perceived 'Quilp' engaged in the brewing of some mysterious liquid compound.

'Hulloa, Bertie! there you are!' he cried. 'Couldn't find your tent. Where the deuce have you pitched it? I looked in at your bungalow before starting, but you'd gone; so I brought you on these letters—here you are. Try this tippie first, though.'

I seized the letters, and saw the only one of interest to me was in my father's hand—there was nothing from Jack, not a line from Daisy. It was a merry dinner, but I had a sort of feeling that had come over me—a something I cannot describe, a feeling of impending misfortune or danger for which it is hard to find a solution. Some people call it a warning; I don't know. Be that as it may, my spirits were depressed, but as the 'simpkin schrab' (champagne) went down, I began to shake off this feeling, and I forgot about home and Daisy and Jack as I listened to the old pig-sticking song.

'Here's to the saddle and spear,
Here's a health to a jolly good burst,
And here's to all those
Who wheree'r the boar goes
Go spurring and spearing along.
'Tis good to be honest and wise,
'Tis better to fear than to dare,
And 'tis good to be clear
Of the snobs in the rear,
One's better thrown in than thrown out.

Then here's to the saddle and spear,' &c. &c.

That night I went to bed and dreamt of sounders of pig, charging boars with six-inch 'tuches,' and lanky sows flying over the midan (plain), and I was awakened at daylight by the shrill screaming of the green parrots in the mango tope, under which my tent was pitched. After the usual light Indian breakfast, we mounted our 'Tats' and cantered off to the ground which was to be our first beat. It was about three miles from the camp, and presented a most favourable appearance for pigs. I distinctly recollect being placed on the right of the line at the corner of a somewhat heavy piece of jungle. I merely state this to show that my mind was perfectly clear as to what took place. I had mounted Line Sergeant, keeping the flea-bitten grey for the afternoon, my ghorawallah handed me my spear, and I sat in the saddle waiting for the cries of the beaters. The morning was cool and the air soft; there was perfect silence until it was broken by the harsh cries of the beaters, the firing of matchlocks, and the din of the tomtoms, as the line advanced. Presently I heard a rustling and a grunting to my left, almost immediately followed by a sounder of squeakers, who rushed off across the midan squealing and grunting; but these were too small fry for me. Then there was a silence which was disturbed by my little Arab snatching at his bridle and bounding forward. I looked to see what had disturbed him, and there to my right, some fifty yards from me, an old boar was leisurely trotting across the plain in front of me. Where he had come from I know not, but I rammed my sun toppee down on my head, caught the little horse by the head, and sent him in pursuit. In five hundred yards I was about ten yards behind him, and the little bay going his best, but for the next mile I never could lessen that distance; there he was, apparently going within himself, and my horse already showing signs of distress. Down one side of a nullah and up the other, but there was the boar going along the same as ever. I shook the bay up and gradually closed up inch by inch; would the little horse last? I am close to him, I rise in my stirrups, lean forward, and drive in the spurs. My spear glances off his quarter and runs along his ribs. The boar stops dead; I shoot forward, and turn my horse just in time to see him charging. In go the spurs, and I meet him half-way; but just as the spear is about to enter the boar's shoulder, the little horse comes down with a thud, crushing and pinioning my leg under him. I am at the mercy of the boar, my face is covered with the

froth from his mouth, I can feel his hot breath on my cheek, I give myself up for lost, when suddenly I hear the thunder of a horse's hoofs upon the hard ground. I manage to raise my head, and there—can my eyes deceive me?—not a yard away, I see Jack Vereker, pale as death, riding at the boar with levelled spear. My horse gives a plunge, strikes me in the head with his hind foot, and I know no more. When I recovered my senses I was stretched on the charpoy in my tent, 'Quilp' was sitting beside me, whilst some one was holding a wet cloth soaked in vinegar and water to my head. I tried to speak, but I could not, my eyes wandered round for Jack Vereker, but I could not see him. Where was he? why was he not by me? Then I again lost consciousness.

I was roused from this state by the voice of 'Quilp' speaking to my butler, and I sat up.

'Well, old chap, how are you?' he said, coming up to my side.

'Where's Jack?' I murmured; 'send him to me.'

'Jack! who's Jack? No Jack here that I know of.'

'He saved my life. I tell you I saw him a yard from me when he killed the boar.'

'I don't understand a word he is saying. Don't think he knows himself, poor chap! Here, Hassan, call the Doctor sahib. There—there—keep quiet! I'll tell you all about it presently.'

By dint of simple remedies I was soon able to sit up, although my head pained me and I persisted in my inquiries for Jack Vereker.

'Better get him back to Poona as soon as possible,' said the Major; 'he doesn't seem to know what he's talking about. Does any one know who Jack Vereker is?'

No one knew. Then they put me into a palki which had been sent for, and I was carried back to Poona.

As soon as it was possible to send me away I was invalided, ordered to England, and left India still inquiring of every one if they had seen Jack Vereker. Every one tried to explain to me that I had been found upon the midan with the little bay standing beside me, and the boar quite dead with my spear through his shoulder; but I could not understand them, and persisted that I saw Jack Vereker kill the boar.

My voyage to England re-established my health, but I brooded over Jack Vereker. Arrived in England, I was met at Southampton by my father, who took me home by easy stages; but having been informed of my strange fancies

respecting Vereker, he took no notice of my persistent inquiries after him. It was only after some weeks that I learnt that poor Jack had broken his neck out hunting *the day after Christmas Day*, that Daisy was never engaged to him and was still single. She explained to me that when I had seen them under the tree on the day of my departure, Jack was pleading my cause with Daisy, that he had offered to settle money on us when we were married, and I also ascertained that by his will he had left me 10,000*l*.

Daisy is now my wife.

Who or what was it I saw when the boar charged ?

PETTICOAT GOWFF ;

OR, THE GROWL OF A GOLFING BACHELOR.

By 'Rockwood.'



Hi, your Petticoat Gowff! your Petticoat Gowff!

They may praise it in ha' or sing it in howff.

Oh, why will the leddies noo no bide at hame,

Makin' gowff an open air drawing-room game ;

'Twould tame a hyena, it mak's a man wild,

When he thinks hoo monie a foursome it's spiled.

If faurer it gangs, I will ne'er tee a ba',

For Petticoat Gowff I can ne'er stan' ava'.

I'm a bachelor, rich, it's every ane thinks,

Twa thoosand a yeer and a Hoose by the links ;

Gin pairtners be wanted they're sure to ask me,

Though there's players a roun' *yet marrit ye see*.

Tom Morris he says, 'They'll have yie if they can.

For you're what they call an *eleegible* man ;

I would marry for spite could I marry them a',

For Petticoat Gowff I can ne'er stan' ava'.

It's nocht but for mischief they come oot to play,

And the gossip o' nicht is the scandal o' day ;

For cheatin', each ane will her neighbour revile,

And they're a cheatin' ane anither the while.

How they coont—it would break a schoolmaster's heart,

Their addition's a science, subtraction an art ;

Their five off a dozen means four, three, or twa',

Oh, Petticoat Golf, I can ne'er stan' ava'.

There's bonnie Kate Campbell, she's tyin' her boot,
 And her ball's in a bunker jist at her foot;
 And while you're no looking she thinks she's no seen,
 A chuck frae her hand and it's oot on the green.
 Maggie Scott's ball lies deep 'mang daisies you see,
And of course she maun pu' a daisy for me:
 As she sticks 't in my coat I daur na' say 'Na,'
 But Petticoat Golf I will no hae ava'.

And this cheatin' gangs on frae hole unto hole,
 Till ye scarcely the sicht o' golf balls can thole;
 And for a' their lost balls ye maun search the whins,
 Till your legs are like cushions chokeful wi' pins.
 They must hae ae more try though the balls gane a yaird,
 So a clean 'foozled' putt ye must never regaird;
 They ne'er care a penny for rules or bye-law,
 Oh, Petticoat Gowff, I can ne'er stand ava'.

Ane would think young lasses might loudly call 'Fore,'
 To warn an auld golfer jist touching three score;
 Choose some soople lad that can swipe frae the tee
 A ball just as faur as an auld man can see.
 A wedding's a bunker, beats niblick or cleek,
 I'd rather stand baffin' the sand for a week
 Than stan' for the parson wi' lass rich or braw,
 Oh, Petticoat Gowff, I can ne'er stand ava'.

FROZEN OUT.

By GEORGE F. UNDERHILL.

T WAS a bachelor without any encumbrances in the shape of near relations, so when Tom Harkaway, the younger son of Squire Harkaway, sent me an invitation to spend Christmas at his father's place, Topsyturny Hall, Helterskeltershire, I was only too pleased to accept it. The letter also asked me to bring down a couple of hunters if I liked, and as I am a keen sportsman in regard to following hounds, I accepted this offer also. So Christmas Eve found me comfortably ensconced in a first-class smoking carriage on my way to Helterskeltershire.

My misgivings commenced during my journey. There was a touch of frost in the air, and the bitterly cold drive from the

station to Topsyturvy Hall convinced me that there would be no hunting for the next few days. Still, 'hope springs eternal in the human breast,' so I devoutly trusted that my convictions would turn out to be wrong.

As I knew the Harkaway family circle intimately, I was spared the ordeal of introductions; but as the reader does not possess the same knowledge, I will shortly introduce the members of the Topsyturvy Christmas House Party, and then leave him to judge of their characters from my own experiences.

First come the Squire and his wife, to whom hospitality seems to be the chief duty in this world. Then there is the elder son, commonly called Billy, with his wife and their two boys, of the mischievous ages of ten and eight, answering respectively to the pet names of Uglymug and Pimplephiz; a married daughter, Kitty Haycroft, with her husband and a fifteen months' old baby, sex unknown to strangers, but called by its mother 'Chicky-wicky'; an unmarried daughter, Eva; while my own chum, Tom, a pretty girl named Jessie Howard, and your humble servant the writer, Bob Swillington, complete the list.

I am accustomed to form rapid conclusions, and during dinner on Christmas Eve I concluded that Tom was very far gone on Jessie Howard. As Eva was the only other unmarried lady, I concluded that I had better carry on a mild flirtation with her. It might add to the enjoyment of her Christmas.

I must now turn to the entries in my diary for the account of my visit.

Sunday, December 25th.—At seven a.m. I was woke up by hearing some carol-singers beneath my bedroom window, wishing me 'A merry, merry Christmas.' I got up and looked out. It was a hard frost. Thinking the singers might have been afraid to wash, I gave them a jug of cold water. They subsided into prose, and seemed ungrateful. At eight a.m. Uglymug came in to ask me what I thought he should get for Christmas-boxes. I gave him a sovereign. At eight-five a.m. Pimplephiz appeared with the same question. My answer was the same. I could not get to sleep again for wondering whether 'Chicky-wicky' and its nurse would appear. Got down to breakfast, where I found everybody shaking hands and saying it was seasonable weather. I considered it to be the reverse. Eva came down late, and had to go the round of the table, kissing



Accidentally caught Blusroad in the eye

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the family. Kissed me in mistake for Tom, and apologised. Awkward for a bashful man, but I rather liked it! General scrimmage for letters on the arrival of the post. Mrs. 'Billy' wanted to see some communications I received in feminine handwriting, and I gave her my tailor's bill instead. I was taken to church, but fell ill during the anthem, and was obliged to leave and come home, where I had a brandy and soda and felt all right again. Rest of the day consumed in eating and drinking. Frost more severe than ever.

Monday, December 26th.—Woke up with a headache. Servant came into my room with a message from Billy to say, 'Would I split a bottle of the Boy with him?' I replied 'Why, certainly.' Have come to the conclusion that life during a frost is not so bad after all. Was calmly informed at breakfast that about a score of people were coming to lunch to play hockey afterwards, and that I was expected to take a prominent part in the game. I protested that I had never played or seen the game played before, but the Squire said that I had only to hit a ball with a stick, and that any fool could do that. Tom said it was exactly the same as football, except that you hit the ball with a stick instead of with your head or your hands. Eva told me confidentially that the ladies were going to play, and that she would take care that I was on her side. I thought this very sweet of her at the time, but subsequently had good reason to believe that she secured my adherence with a view to her own physical safety. Did not see Tom or Jessie Howard during the morning, so gave Eva a lesson in billiards. Uglymug offered to mark for us, but I told him he had better go and play with his brother Pimplephiz. I enjoyed the game immensely.

A crowd of people turned up to lunch, and I discovered that it is the correct thing for hockey players to eat a heavy meal before the game, and for the male performers to smoke cigarettes and fortify themselves with dry sherry. Eva Harkaway and her sister, Kitty Haycroft, then chose sides, after which we walked to the hockey-field. On the way there I got into conversation with a curate, named Blueroad, who informed me that he always felt faint at half-time, and so was in the habit of carrying a flask of Scotch whisky with him. I determined to renew our conversation at half-time.

I certainly consider hockey to be a very lame substitute for fox-hunting. During the first five minutes I was hit three times over the shins. Just as I was on the point of hitting the ball,

somebody else invariably hit me. Once I made what I thought was a very good run, but Mrs. Billy got in my way, and I had to put my arms round her to prevent her from falling. It looked as if we were indulging in a public embrace, and I wished that the act had been as realistic as the appearance. I was glad when half-time was called, and I discovered my friend Blueroad and his flask.

I played with more vigour during the second half of the game, and accidentally caught Blueroad in the eye with my stick. I apologised profusely, but he said it wasn't of the least consequence, as if he were disfigured he should escape preaching on the following Sunday. He then finished the contents of his flask. On returning to Topsyturny Hall, I had a split soda and something in it with Eva on the quiet in the study before dressing for dinner.

In the evening there was a servants' ball. The servants seemed nervous at first, but grew more hilarious as time progressed and the ladies of the house retired. The stud groom got over the course for the waltz stakes like a corkscrew getting into a cork, but ran well with the housekeeper in the mistletoe cup. I caught Tom kissing Mrs. Harkaway's maid in the scullery.

Tuesday, December 27th.—Frost still hard. On coming down to breakfast I found that everybody was going skating on a large mere some two miles away. I was obliged to join the party and carry Eva's skates, as well as my own. On the ice I felt rather like Mr. Winkle, and soon found myself in the same position as that illustrious gentleman, much to the amusement of Uglymug and Pimplephiz. As ice is cold and hard to sit down upon, I took some cherry brandy to revive myself, and watched Billy cutting a complicated figure, in the performance of which he also met with an accident. We walked home in detachments. Uglymug persisted in coming with Eva and me, so I made him carry Eva's skates. I noticed that Tom and Jessie Howard were three or four hundred yards behind. A happy thought struck me. I told Uglymug that I had kept his uncle's cigarette-case, which I had borrowed from him, and asked him to run back with it. He promptly obeyed, and Eva and I turned off the road down a bridle-path through a wood. Tom must have sent him back to me, for we saw him from behind some undergrowth hurrying along as fast as his legs could carry him. He missed the turning into the

wood, so I concluded that he was a good fag, though a bad hound.

At dinner, the Squire, thinking that I might consider hockey and skating to be mild substitutes for fox-hunting, which I certainly did, suggested that, as it bade fair to be a moonlight night, we should go out and have some wild-fowl shooting. There were plenty of ducks, he added, and we should be sure to have good sport. I did not like the suggestion. In the first place, I am a bad shot; in the second place, I did not relish the idea of turning out in the cold air after a big dinner succeeded by port wine. But as Billy and Tom both expressed their delight, I could do nothing but resign myself to the inevitable, which I did with as good a grace as I could assume. From the way Eva smiled, however, I am afraid that I did not deceive her.

As I was putting on the warmest clothes I possessed, preparatory to what I considered to be a madcap expedition, Tom burst into my room.

'I say, old chap! I want to ask your advice about something.'

'What is it?' I asked, as soon as we were alone.

'I say, old chap! what can a fellow marry on?'

I replied that the common or garden English labourer considered a sovereign a week sufficient. My answer was purposely frivolous, because I had been asking myself the same question while dressing for dinner.

'Don't act the first cousin to an idiot. To tell you the truth, I proposed to Jessie—I mean Miss Howard—in the conservatory this evening before dinner, and I want to know how much I ought to ask the Guv. to allow me to enable us to live comfortably.'

I always knew that modesty was conspicuous by its absence in Tom's character, but I confess that the cool manner in which he made his present request roused my temper. Here I had been puzzling my brains about stable expenses, wages of lady-maids, cost of brougham, and other financial items connected with the connubial state, and all Tom wants to know is how much he should ask his father for. To add to my indignation he continued to say in the most unabashed manner:—

'I know the Guv. would give me what I wanted; but I don't like to rook him for too much at first.'

As my own thoughts about matrimonial finance had been

occasioned by Tom's sister, I resolved that he should not ask for too much, either at first or afterwards. I forget my exact words, but the purport of them was that he should settle down and do something, as he could hardly expect the Squire to keep him in idleness.

'But what the deuce am I to do?' he asked, petulantly.

This was a poser, but I was equal to the occasion. 'A man never knows what he can do till he tries.'

Tom said 'Bosh!' and then indulged in a long and uninteresting monologue on the merits of Miss Howard, which would probably have lasted all night, if we had not heard the Squire's voice, telling us to look sharp.

With visions of rheumatism and influenza I shouldered the fowling-piece which had been lent to me, and then we all walked down to a stream about a mile and a half away. It was a moonlight night, which, doubtless, I should have thought lovely if I had seen it from behind the window of a warm room, but when the Squire said that the moon was so bright that we should probably have to lie hid for an hour or more, my feelings towards that moon underwent a change. She did not inspire me with poetry, as she has done to others; no, she inspired me with impatience and cold, strong language and a bad temper.

After some forty-five minutes two or three ducks rose, and bang went three guns. I was thinking of Eva as I took a pull at my flask at the time, so missed my chance of a shot and thought duck-shooting worse sport than ever.

We then proceeded to walk up to the fowl, which, in my opinion, we might have done at first, as they did not walk up to us. Still, walking along the banks of a stream on a frosty night when the ground is slippery, is not a pastime which I would recommend to a nervous man, especially if he has to carry a fowling-piece into the bargain. Certainly, it was better than standing still, and we got more shots, though I am afraid that my addition to the bag consisted of one duck. I might have shot more, but I inadvertently slipped and went—luckily feet foremost—into the stream.

I had broken the ice in my cold bath in the morning, in obedience to that custom which demands that every Englishman should sponge himself with cold water before eating breakfast, but never have I found water so cold as the water of that stream. I went in up to my waist, and in my



I went in up to my waist

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frantic endeavours to get out, lost my fowling-piece. As I could not shoot wild ducks without a gun, I made the best of my way back to Topsyturvy Hall, where, having changed my dripping garments, I consoled myself with hot whisky and water till the others arrived.

When they came in, they all said what a capital night's sport they had had. I am glad they enjoyed it. As for myself, wild horses shall not drag me out duck-shooting again!

Wednesday, December 28th.—I was woke up by Tom, who came into my bedroom with a pint bottle of the pink wine of France. After drawing the cork, his first words were, 'I say, old chap! I've settled everything. The Gov. is always in a good temper after lunch, so you had better go then and break the news to him about Jessie and me. That's a capital plan, isn't it?'

The champagne immediately lost its flavour. However, either my good nature, or my folly, allowed me to be persuaded by Tom's eloquence, and I promised to think over the matter.

I always make an attempt to keep my promise. The attempt may not be successful, but then there is a certain satisfaction to me, if not to other people, of having made it. After breakfast, therefore, I went to smoke my matutinal pipe of peace in the shrubbery, and think over what Tom had said to me. I was disturbed in my meditations by Eva, who was searching for holly with which to renew the church decorations. I suggested that we might find some holly in the fernery, so we went there. Luckily we encountered neither Uglymug nor Pimplephiz.

I meant to ask her how I could best plead Tom's cause before the Squire, but that pint of pink wine had muddled my brain. I forgot about Tom, and spoke on my own behalf. Then some hanging maidenhair did duty for mistletoe, till we heard the gong sound for luncheon.

I had no appetite for the midday meal. I was conscious that Tom and Jessie Howard were gazing at me, as they wondered what I was going to say to the Squire. Mrs. Billy looked at me with a quizzical air, as much as to say, 'I know how you have been spending the morning,' and Eva went crimson whenever she met my eyes, which was on the average once in every ten seconds. I would rather ride a young 'un at the biggest oxer in Leicestershire than go through the ordeal of

such a luncheon again. I had to drink three glasses of dry sherry before I could make up my mind to enter the Squire's study.

'Well, Swillington! Want to see me particularly? What's in the wind now? I'm an old hound myself, but I couldn't for the life of me catch the scent at lunch to-day.'

'There were too many sheep about, sir,' I ventured to remark; 'so both foxes took the liberty of cheating hounds. To come to the point at once, Eva has promised to marry me, and I have every reason to believe that Miss Howard has promised to marry Tom.'

'And both of you have been hunting vixens when you ought to have been hunting foxes. Still, I suppose it is legitimate at this time of the year.'

Thursday, December 29th.—I received early visits from Uglymug and Pimplephiz, who told me that Uncle Tom had informed them that I was about to become their uncle. I gave them what they wanted. Those lads ought to have indigestion the first week they go back to school.

April 1st.—Married Eva Harkaway.

SENSATIONAL CRICKET IN 1894.

By SOMERVILLE GIBNEY.



AS I write these lines the rain is coming down steadily, and it is raw and chilly. But the day is only a fair sample of what the Cricket season of 1894 has been. We have had bad ones of late years, but this has been the worst since the Seventies. Last year the weather seemed to have taken a turn in the batsman's favour, but it soon repented, and this season it has again showered its benefits, if benefits they may be called, upon the bowlers, and they are the only participators in the game who will approve of them—if, indeed, they do approve. No doubt it is pleasant to feel you can make the ball do what you like on the sticky wicket, but when it is at the cost of damp flannels, chilled fingers, and twinges of rheumatism, one begins to think the satisfaction may be too dearly purchased. I have kept particular note of the weather, and during the past season there have only been three

fine hot weeks of real cricket weather, and one decently fine ; in all the others there has been rain in more or less quantity and cold. It has not been a batsman's season ; it has certainly not been a spectator's, for at most matches you had an overcoat or a mackintosh as a companion, and very often both ; and so if any class of cricketers is particularly anxious to claim it, the table of averages point it out as the bowlers. Certainly the bowlers have done well, and it would not have stood much to their credit if they had not, considering how the advantages were on their side. At the head of them (I am writing of first-class cricket now) comes Porter, with an average of 8·3, but then he only bowled 80 overs for fourteen wickets. Among those who took over fifty wickets, Pougher comes first with fifty-six, obtained in 323·2 overs, for 524 runs, giving him an average of 9·20. Mold took the greatest number of wickets, 207, at an average of 12·64, Richardson running him close, taking 196, with an average of only 10·64. While upon the subject of first-class bowling, I may mention Richardson's feat in the Surrey and Essex match, on the 18th of June, when in the first innings of the latter he took *all* the ten wickets, clean bowling eight of them. This was the eighth notable instance of this performance in the last quarter of a century. There was a sensational commencement to the Lancashire and Yorkshire match, on the 14th, 15th, and 16th of May, in the former's first innings—viz., 12 balls, no runs, 4 wickets. In a smaller match, Swanage Visitors *v.* Weymouth, on the 18th of August, Hughes, the Weymouth 'Pro,' took all the Visitors' wickets for 40 ; and in M.C.C. and Ground *v.* Oxfordshire, on the 27th of August, the Brothers Rogers took nineteen of the M.C.C. wickets between them, P. Rogers securing ten and A. Rogers nine. In minor matches there have also been some sensations ; but in a pretty long experience I have noticed this is always the case, the reason, I fancy, being that in inferior cricket it is easier to bowl straight than to learn to play with a straight bat, or why is it that in small matches the scores nearly always run low ? However, I will not enter into this question here, merely contenting myself with giving a few examples to point what I say.

On the 14th of May, Coldharbour, Dorking, played St. Michael's Institute, London, at Coldharbour, on a wet wicket, and for the former A. Booker took eight wickets for no runs, and V. Carlile two wickets for 5 runs. St. Michael's

score was 6. In another country match, Brigg *v.* Gainsborough, on the 9th of June, Brigg only totalled 38, Gainsborough made 19 for three wickets, but the remaining seven only added 4. J. T. Barley, a slow bowler, in his last three overs taking seven wickets for 2 runs; he did the hat trick twice, and altogether took nine wickets for 8 runs. Speaking of bowling reminds me that on the 31st of May, in Sussex *v.* Lancashire, Alfred Shaw made his reappearance in first-class cricket after an absence of seven years—a long enough interval to cause his to be an almost unknown name among the younger generation of cricketers. But now we must take a glance at the doings of batsmen, for, after all, a match is won by the number of runs scored. In county cricket Surrey has once more gone ahead; they have had luck on their side; but at the same time they have had consistent good play all through the eleven, and thoroughly deserve the honour they have gained. And at the head of the first-class averages stands their man Brockwell, who, as the result of 45 innings, comes out with 38·9, a wonderful performance considering the wickets he has had to play on; and the next to him on the list of those who have batted more than twenty times is their ‘pocket-player’ Abel, who for 47 innings has an average of 34·19. Others of their team are well up in the list, and in county cricket alone ten of their players average more than 10 each. There have been some wonderfully close finishes in the county matches. Somerset beat Sussex on the 17th and 18th of May by one wicket. Middlesex beat Lancashire, on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of June, by one wicket. On the 19th of July Surrey was beaten by Leicestershire by 34, only making 35 in their second innings. On the same date Notts beat Kent by 13. On the 23rd and 24th of July, in Yorkshire and Gloucestershire, in the former’s second innings, nine wickets were down for 19, but the last wicket added 42 runs in thirty-five minutes, and they won by 26 runs. The scores ran low—Yorks, 140 and 61; Gloucester, 108 and 67. On the 6th, 7th, and 8th of August, Middlesex played Somerset and beat them by 19. In Hampshire *v.* Essex, on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of August, the former won by 9 runs; but *the* match of the year was Surrey *v.* Lancashire, on the 16th, 17th, and 18th of August. Lancashire went in to make 75 to win; two wickets fell for 2, five for 9, seven for 26; but then a stop came to the rot, and when the last wicket went in I was required to tie, the run was obtained, and then Mold was caught at the wicket, and

Surrey's chance for the championship was made much more secure. It was a grand match from beginning to end. The last county tie-match was Somerset and Middlesex, in 1890. In smaller matches there was a tie, on the 16th of May, when the Staff College, Camberley, and Col. Fox's team made 109 each.

There has been some big hitting this year, but nothing to what has taken place in more genial seasons. I have only been able to note six innings of over 500 and twenty-three of over 400—that is, taking one paper which devotes a certain space to the better class of cricket all through the season. There has not appeared a single instance of a 600 innings. The number of centuries has also been decidedly lower, forty-five being the highest number scored in one week, that ending the 30th of June, which was one of the fine and very hot ones. Among the big scores may be mentioned the Senior match at Cambridge, 7th, 8th, and 9th of May—Pope's side, 260 and 439; Robinson's, 521 and 29, no wicket; and in the same month, on the 26th, the Royal Military Academy made 51 against the 520 for eight wickets of the Royal Engineers. On the 25th, 26th, and 27th of June, M.C.C. made 258 and 595 for seven wickets (Grace, 196) against the 262 and 217 of Cambridge. In Tonbridge *v.* The Wanderers, on the 27th and 28th of July, the former made 555 (G. Gower, 181), the latter 476 (D. L. A. Jephson, 257). The Blue Mantles made 545 for nine wickets against the 168 and 128 for two wickets of the United Service, on the 13th and 14th of August; and on the 20th and 21st, M.C.C. scored largely against them, making 594 (Whitehead, 101; W. Morgan, 110; and Captain Raitt, 107) to their 4 for two wickets. On the 17th and 18th of August, in the match Seaton *v.* Crystal Palace, when the former made 138 and 93 to the latter's 508 for seven wickets, D. L. A. Jephson again scored heavily, making 157, and with S. Coleman, 121, putting on 300 for first wicket. I have two instances of individual big hitting: in the Lancashire and Somerset match, on the 23rd and 24th of July; in the first innings of the former, Sugg hit an over of Tyler's for 20, two square leg hits of 4 each, and two drives of 6 each; and on the 26th, 27th, and 28th of same month, in Somerset *v.* Surrey, S. J. Woods hit an over of Lockwood's for 20, four each ball. But without doubt the biggest hit of the year was one for 93! It was recorded in an evening paper—and I give it as there stated. The Peckham Pushers were playing Camberwell Albion, on the 26th of May. Albion made 129, and there remained

fifty-five minutes for play. The Pushers could only look for a draw, and sent in J. H. Brown and A. Archer. From the very first ball Brown made a big drive, the ball lodging in a rook's nest. While a fielder was getting the ball, which could be seen, and was therefore not lost, they ran 93. The Pushers eventually knocked off the remainder, and won by four wickets.

Captain Wynyard, a member of this year's famous Hampshire Eleven, has played well, and on the 28th of August was presented with a testimonial for having scored centuries in three consecutive county matches—viz., against Sussex, Leicestershire, and Essex. This year two first-class county matches were over on one day, Lancashire making 231 against Somersetshire's 31 and 132, on the 17th of July, and Yorkshire defeating them in a similar manner two days later. On the 6th of June the M.C.C. and South African match was over in one day. South Africa scored 126 and 60; M.C.C., having made 103, went in again for 84. One wicket fell for 32 and the third for 63. They then had twenty minutes to play, 21 runs to make, and seven wickets to fall. Three batsmen were dismissed at 68 and two more at 71, the innings closing for 72, the last seven wickets having made 9 runs.

In the Surrey and Middlesex match, on the 26th of May, Jephson got out in a curious way. In playing a ball of Rawlins', part of the blade of his bat broke off and removed a bail; he was out, 'hit wicket.' On the 16th of June, the Robinson Family played Flax Bourton, making 46 and 130 for one wicket, the latter 101 and 48 for eight wickets. There was another family match on the 7th of July, when the Foster Family scored 82 against the 89 of Stubbington. Sussex won their first county match against Notts on the 23rd and 24th of July. In the Notts and Leicester match, on the 30th and 31st of July and 1st of August, Gunn caught De Trafford, but as he was standing beyond the boundary the ball was dead, and De Trafford continued his innings. A curious case of a match being won without a wicket being lost occurred on the 28th of July. Brentwood made 22; their opponents, Shifnal, went in, and made 106 for no wickets, and closed their innings. Brentwood could only total 23 on their second attempt. In Notts *v.* Surrey, on the 6th, 7th, and 8th of August, Pike, the new Notts wicket-keeper, caught five men.

And now, before concluding, let us take a hurried glance at

some of the youngsters' performances. Harrow and Eton had only one day's play, owing to rain, and drew. Wellingborough Grammar School has again scored largely. On the 14th of May they made 304 against Wollaston, who only totalled 80; and, on the 19th of May, 378 (P. A. Fryer, 134) against Emmanuel College, Cambridge; while, on the 18th July, their 'Under 14' team made 309 (J. F. Morris, 110, not out; Johnson, 89; Cook, 56), against the 6 and 8 of Bedford Priory School. Morris and Cook took nine wickets each. When, on the 18th of July, Oxford Preparatory School played Waynflete, for the former, Harper, who is under 14, made 105, not out, in seventy-three minutes. When Tonbridge played Brighton College, on the 19th of June, they made 445 to the latter's 93. On the 2nd of July, Leatherhead School played Marlow School; the latter made 231, but Leatherhead, in two and a quarter hours, ran up 301 for eight wickets—the last 100 in thirty-five minutes. Clifton College, on the 19th of July, made 402 for four wickets (T. A. Curtis, 228, not out) against the 88 of Clifton Club. In the Rugby and Marlborough match, on the 1st of August, J. Stanning (152, not out) and C. P. Nickalls (109) made 207 in one hundred minutes. The scores were: Rugby, 398; Marlborough, 101 and 215. Glenalmond College beat Forfarshire, on the 20th of June, by 1 run; and, on the 3rd and 4th of August, the same result took place between Cheltenham and Haileybury, the scores being 172 and 211, and 158 and 224. And with this exciting finish, let me bring my cricket sensations for 1894 to a close. They have been terribly wandering and disjointed, I know; but then, after all, is not this the best kind of yarning for the winter evenings before the smoking or billiard-room fire? Cut and dried statistics would then seem out of place; and when one looks back over the doings of past seasons, they never stand out in their entirety, but only here and there some special incident appears graphically, amid the general hazy blur. And so I lay down my pen with the fervent hope that the coming season may not be so entirely a bowler's one as 1894 has been.

MELTONIANA.

By TOM MARKLAND.

PORT and the sporting proclivity is by no means a monopoly of the '*jeunesse dorée*.' I have ridden many a 'rasper' in the wake of a straight-necked varmint, and still I don't think I derived more enjoyment from the best and fastest gallop I ever took part in than I did when, as a boy, I rode 'Clipper Hill's' horses over the low hedges and faggot heaps in the field on the Great Dalby road, where 'Clipper's' steeds disported themselves when they were lucky enough to be released from the collar.

I suppose there must have been a garden in days gone by in that corner of 'Clipper's' field, and the low hedges above referred to 'the mouldering ruins that Time had made' of the original fences, planted to keep gadding cattle off the onion beds. At any rate, there they were, and we boys thought ourselves young Osbaldistons as we rode poor old 'Clipper's' cattle over this miniature Ranksboro. This used to happen almost every Saturday, though the same boys were not always there, but the joke goes round to this day that 'Clipper' entered into a discussion on religious matters with a *confrère*, and the question of the desirability of a Sabbath having cropped up, they treated it first from a theological point of view, and, not making much of that, proceeded to see what it looked like from a practical point of view.

'Depend on it,' says his opponent, 'it's a good thing for man and beast to rest one day in seven. I should think an infidel would own to that.'

'Clipper' sat thoughtful for a few minutes, and then, with a triumphant look on his weather-beaten countenance, said, 'How do you account for this then? You know I finish most of my work by Friday night, so the 'osses gets *two* Sundays instead of one, and yet they're that lazy and stiff every Monday morning, it wants a day or two to get 'em in form again.'

'Oh, as to that,' replied the other, 'you want 'em nearer home where you can superintend their Sunday, or rather, their Saturday diversions. If you look as carefully round that Dalby

road field for whipcord as you do for mushrooms, you'll find some.'

So he did, for we were in the habit of using the article as a temporary bit and bridle combined. It didn't last long, but Leicestershire boys know how to fall at an early date, and I hardly remember as many accidents over these youthful escapades as I could count 'on one hand.' Boys fall lightly too, and their bones are not so brittle as those of their seniors. This field was part of what the Melton people call 'The Town Lands,' which are let periodically by auction—whether annually or not I forget—but 'Clipper,' after gathering quite a collection of our bridles, came to the conclusion that his tenancy of the field in question had better be brought to a termination as early as possible. Though this involved his taking a piece of 'accommodation land'—an expensive thing in that quarter—he found no whipcord scattered about, and his ideas of the value of Sunday to the human race, were reinstated on their proper basis, though they had been terribly shaken. You see, we thought some of that whipcord might be saving up for our benefit, and therefore left his screws alone.

Such, however, were the Melton boys then, and such I suppose they always will be. From the gentleman farmer's son to the grocer's shop boy, their great ambition is to get 'outside' a horse, be it their own or somebody else's. The most striking instance I ever knew of this inborn propensity for riding was that of a cow-boy we employed to drive some cattle leisurely up the two miles from Thorpe Arnold to 'The Ashes,' where he should turn them in for about three hours, and bring them down home in the same leisurely fashion after they had rested and had their water. One of the cows was lame, and we couldn't think how it came to pass, till a man who fetched coals from Melton Station for the Waltham folks, informed us that instead of letting the cattle rest, this boy and others were in the habit of *riding* the cattle when they (the boys) were not engaged in rifling the nests of the wood-pigeons, or ransacking the coppices for nuts. I never saw them engaged in the amusement, but considering that the field consisted of two rather steep slopes, and that the boy would find his legs rather short for the 'lap,' the 'spills' must have been numerous, and a boy who would ride under such difficulties must have been a 'Nimrod of Nature,' and would ride anything rather than not ride at all.

Talking of 'Clipper's' horses, however, makes me wish I

could wield the pencil. One day in the Crimean Winter, Mr. Lloyd's waggoner was stuck (that is, his team was) in the snow, and 'Clipper' happened to be passing with an empty trap, whereupon the waggoner struck a bargain with him to give a lift to the top of the hill. 'Clipper' was willing, and a pair of gears were forthcoming, so there seemed nothing required but to put the cattle in motion; not so, however, for when 'Gee up,' and the whip were applied to 'Solomon' ('Clipper's' steed), that sapient animal looked round with an expression which said as plainly as words, 'see you hanged before I'll pull other 'osses' loads after we've got rid of our own,' and all his master's efforts were in vain; he couldn't get Solomon to move—I would like to transfer that knowing look to canvas—but the bargain had to be rescinded, so 'Clipper' had to pay his own 'shot' at Measure's hostelry, and take it out of Solomon in the three miles from Great Dalby to Melton Mowbray.

A rash bet was made at that same hostelry by a farmer from Lowerby Estate—where they jumped the horse over the dining-room table with all the glasses, &c., on it—with Jemmy Goodwin, Lord Wilton's stud groom. The latter was very fond of the trigger, and knew a thing or two more than his bucolic friend. Taking up any ordinary tumbler, he said, 'now you wouldn't think I could cut an ash bough that thick clean through with my gun and an ordinary charge of three drams of powder and an ounce and a quarter of shot.'

'No,' replied the farmer; 'I'll bet you a fiver you can't, three times over if you like.'

'Done with you,' replied Jemmy, 'and we'll settle it on the first ash-tree we can find.'

The bet was made, and they sallied forth to put the matter to the test. Of course they hadn't far to go in the Dalby neighbourhood before coming across an ash, and Jemmy, selecting a bough, asked the farmer if he thought that thick enough, or would he like it measured?

'Oh, that's good enough for me,' replied the farmer, whereupon Jemmy, whose gun had been loaded by the other, dropped the bough, cutting it as clean as though it had been done with an axe.

'Another load of oats gone! Another load of oats gone!' cried the discomfited one, as he ruefully extracted the fifteen pounds from his canvas purse.

'Take my tip,' remarked Jemmy, 'next time you bet on any-

thing of the sort, *make it oak.*' Jemmy knew what he was talking about. All gunners are aware that you can cut an ash bough in the manner above described, but all you can do to the bough of the 'brave old oak' is to make it bend and hang by its lacerated fibres, *ergo*, ingenuous youth, if inclined to put your dollars on such an event, and are backing the gun, 'ware oak.'

Talking of oaks brings to my mind the oaks in 'Acre Lane,' the Bescaby Oaks and all the others that stud the wonderland of sport 'round Belvoir and Quorndon Plains.' With regard to Bescaby Oaks, I may mention that my father remembered his grandfather relating how in 'the forty-five,' when Prince Charlie reached Derby, and the pickets were at Hawston Bridge, they 'tailed' the horses and turned them into the same 'Oaks,' for the Highland Army had a habit of taking anybody's horses to draw the baggage, and turning them up to find their way home as best they might, when they could go no further, after which they took some one else's in the same unceremonious manner. Our family were Jacobites, but like many others, they foresaw the failure of the expedition, and hence the precautions taken by them, in common with the rest, not to implicate themselves in a desperate attempt to overturn a dynasty which we have since learnt to look upon as an excellent substitute for that of the romantic but impractical one that preceded them. It's a 'far cry to Carlisle,' and it isn't 'Meltoniana,' but apologising for a short digression, I may say that one of the Prince's officers, a member of my wife's family, lay in Carlisle Castle, awaiting execution the next morning, but through the happy accident of a Jacobite prison warder he escaped. I always call C. E. the 'Prince' on the lines of—

'God bless us all; God bless the King; God bless the Faith's Defender;
God bless—no harm in blessing the "Pretender."
Who that Pretender is, and who the King—
God bless us all—is quite another thing.'

Meantime we are leaving the grass grounds of the shires, and I know readers love to keep in those confines. Was there ever a keener follower of the chase than Johnny Holmes? When he was on the verge of bankruptcy he turned out—tops and all—to the meet, and when a creditor remonstrated with him on the extravagance of such a proceeding, he coolly replied,—

'A fish can't live out of water, can he?'

'I don't see the force of your remark,' replied the tradesman.

‘Ah! you’ve either been born out of Leicestershire, or you’re “in it and not of it.”’

‘I don’t see why you should be following the hounds at great expense while you owe me money.’

‘You’ll get your cash if you’ll only have patience,’ replied Johnny, ‘but as long as I have a horse in my stable I’ll follow the beauties in the pigskin, and when I haven’t, I’ll follow them on foot, in spite of you and all the bum-bailiffs between Market Harborough and Belvoir.’

This was a ‘facer’ for the tradesman, but Johnny, as all men in those regions know, cleared off his liabilities, whether with his own coin or by the aid of his sporting friends matters not; all the same, it proves that the identical remark I made about the juveniles at the beginning of this article applies to those same juveniles after they have arrived at years of discretion, and cease to be classed in the ‘juvenile’ category.

Talking of bum-bailiffs reminds me of a smart thing done by a sporting farmer, a relation of mine, who met a brother chip from Kirby, one Tuesday in the market.

‘How do you do?’ said the latter, ‘I wish you would lend me forty pounds for about forty minutes.’

‘With pleasure,’ replied Tom, and therewith he went to the bank and got the money.

Shortly afterwards, he heard a little bird whisper that things were queer at the Kirby farm.

Tom looked his creditor up, and ascertained from him the amount for which the execution was made.

Thereupon he drew sufficient money from the same bank, took a ‘fly’ to Kirby, paid out the ‘bums,’ and then proceeded to drive off sufficient ‘stock’ to cover the whole amount—of course with the Kirby man’s consent—and thus recouped himself, about as smart a bit of business as I ever knew transacted by a sporting man.

BARRY'S CHANCE.

By FOX RUSSELL.

LIKE a good many other Irish landowners, young Lord Barry and his brother, Tom had, for some considerable time past, been getting into very low water, financially speaking, until at the time this story opens, the advisability of 'pulling up' altogether and trying their luck in one of the Colonies, was being seriously mooted by the twain. Neither had any extravagant tastes, but ever since the death of the old Lord, their father, some few years before, agrarian troubles and the professional agitator combined had caused money to be so tight with them, that hunting had become transmuted from a sport into a field for selling the young horses they bred; and shooting, more a matter of supplying the temporal needs of the inner man than a country gentleman's pastime.

Amidst all their trials and troubles, they still clung to the old home at Kilsallaghan Castle, though the place was fast getting into a hopeless state of disrepair, and more than three-quarters of the rooms were shut up. Gradually they had been obliged to part with almost all the servants, male and female, until their present staff of retainers numbered but two of the latter sex—old Martha Maguire, who had nursed the young fellows in their infancy, and her niece, a shock-headed girl of fifteen—and an equal number of men employed in the stables. As for the gardens, with the exception of the potato patch, which was Tom's especial care, they produced nothing to speak of, except weeds.

Lord Barry—more familiarly known as Bill—chiefly occupied himself with the horses, and in spite of that unpleasant animal, the 'wolf at the door,' there was usually something, even if it were only an unbroken three or four-year-old, that could give him more or less of a gallop with hounds. Breeding a useful hunter, now and then, has kept many a farmer on his legs, and so it was with these impecunious young landlords. The cheque received for the sale of one of their own breeding and breaking, had many a time come just at a moment when the brothers

had been hardly pressed for what is vulgarly termed 'a bit to go on with,' and now, at this discussion of ways and means, their thoughts naturally turned to the subject of which of their small possessions they could sell in order to raise money. Bill threw a lump of turf on the fire, and said, in gloomy tones, 'Suppose the chestnut will have to go?'

Tom, without taking the pipe out of his mouth, nodded acquiescence.

Lord Barry gazed into the fire for a few minutes longer, and then again broke silence: 'Best four-year-old I think I've ever been on. Look at the way she carried me that day we ran to Murtagh, and only the second time she had ever seen hounds. I believe, if I could afford to keep her, that she's good enough to win at Punchestown.'

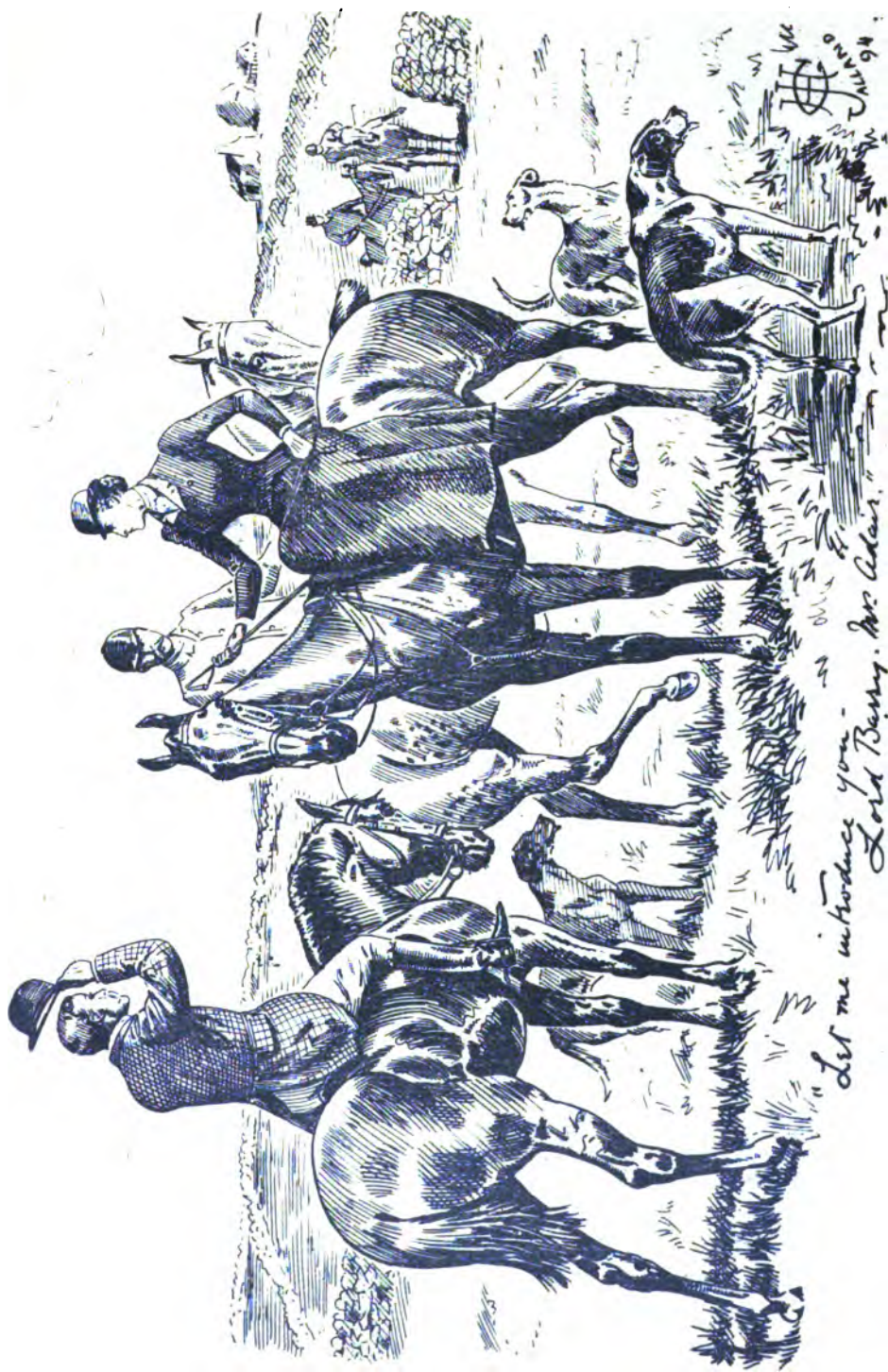
'Yes; but, my dear old boy, you know as well as I do, that that's just the rub—we can't afford to keep anything that there's a chance of realising any money on: better put in an advertisement at once. I wonder what she is likely to make?'

'Not half what she is worth, anyhow,' growled his brother. Then, in gentler tones, he said, laying his hand on Tom's shoulder, 'It is hard, though, this constant worry for the next few shillings to go on with. It has even come to neither of us owning a decent suit of clothes, now.'

'Rubbish!' cried Tom, sturdily.

'The clothes I am wearing would put Brian O'Lynn to the blush,' broke in Lord Barry, laughing merrily. 'Now to comb out the correct form of advertisement for the good little mare.' And he resolutely strode off to put his design into execution.

The chestnut mare in question was well worthy of her young owner's good opinion. Rising four years old, her burnished copper coat had never yet known the indignity of the clipping-machine, but lay close, smooth, and glossy; she stood a trifle under 15.2, but was, of course, still growing. With well-rounded barrel, immense depth and quarters, on which the muscles stood out like knotted cordage, she combined the power of a small dray-horse with the speed and activity of her thoroughbred progenitors. The lean, intelligent head, beautifully set on to a slightly arched neck, merging into shoulders that a good judge might well go into rhapsodies over, rendered her one of the most beautiful specimens of her race. She was as the apple of his eye to Lord Barry, and the only reason he had not sold her in the usual way to some member of the local hunt,



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was that he set a price on her which none amongst them could afford to give. Therefore it was that, driven almost to the end of his tether, he was forced to advertise his darling for sale.

'And, with the irony of fate, I suppose she will fall into the hands of some ass who won't be able to ride her, or else a woman who won't understand her real value. If I could keep her, I'd win—well, I don't know what, but anything, I should think, in reason.'

Almost a week had elapsed from the time when the advertisement had appeared, and Lord Barry began to despair of getting a customer. With that feeling of despair, however, was mingled a certain sneaking pleasure that the mare still remained his, and he cast abroad in every direction to see whether he could not manage somehow to do without the sacrifice involved in selling her. All in vain, however. An unexpected demand upon his slender resources, small in itself, but serious in its magnitude to him, had quite decided him to repeat his advertisement, when the stables of Kilsallaghan Castle received, one day, a wholly unexpected visitor.

Tom was sucking away at his pipe and placidly hoeing the potato patch, whilst, according to custom, Bill, attired in the comfortable, if slightly inadequate, dress of a shirt and pair of cloth breeches and gaiters, was, wisp in hand, duly strapping the good chestnut mare, when the stable door was gently opened and a veritable apparition was revealed to the young man's gaze. To use his own phraseology, it was a 'she' apparition!—a singularly pretty woman of some five-and-twenty summers stood before him, attired in a dark riding habit and low round hat. In her hand she held a neat cane hunting-crop. Without waiting for any invitation, the lady walked into the stable, carefully closing the door behind her. Addressing Lord Barry, who stood somewhat embarrassed, and taken aback at being caught in such attire, she said, with a look at the closed door:

'Always as well to keep them out of the draughts, I think. Is this the mare you have for sale?'

'This is the mare—yes. Should you like to see her out? I will put a saddle on her, and you can see her gallop if you wish.'

'I have no permission from Lord Barry to do that yet, but I suppose he would not mind. What sort of a man is your master? Would he object, do you think, to my trying her in a side-saddle?'

Lord Barry at once saw that he was mistaken for his own groom. Entering into the fun of the thing, he took up his cue without a moment's hesitation. 'Well, Lord Barry is a man very fond of his horses; but I am sure you would have his full permission to try the mare in any way you pleased.'

The lady still hesitated. 'I have heard that your master once made things very unpleasant for a Dublin dealer who came to see a horse of his in his absence, and tried him without permission. I heard that Lord Barry swore ——'

'He does swear sometimes, madam, I know,' interjected the 'groom' with a grin.

'Swore to break the man's neck if ever he came into his yard again,' continued the lady, without noticing the interruption. 'I should not like to—to incur his displeasure, and so I think I had better go to the Castle, and speak to him first. Is he in, do you know?'

'He is not in the Castle, madam, just now; but I have full power to do what I please in selling the mare, so pray have her out at once.'

Whilst so speaking, Lord Barry had passed a soft rubber over the mare's silky coat, and then put a bridle on her. 'Would you like me to ride her first, or will you have a side-saddle on at once?' he asked.

'I'll call my servant to bring the saddle from my cart,' replied the fair visitor, and stepping outside the stable she was momentarily lost to the young man's gaze.

'By Jove! what a lovely girl!' murmured the owner of the chestnut mare. 'I never saw such a ——' but his further utterance was cut short by the arrival of the neatest of side-saddles, carried by a smart groom. Girths and straps were taken up or let down as required, and then Lord Barry led the mare out of the stable. With the slightest possible assistance from her servant, the lady lightly got into her saddle, and drew the reins gently through her fingers, dropped her hands low upon the chestnut's withers, and then looked to Lord Barry for directions.

'Which way shall I go?' she asked.

'If you would wait a minute, madam, I could get a horse and—and put my coat on,' he said, with rather an embarrassed air, as he recollected the inglorious state of his apparel, 'to accompany you to the jumping-field.'

Madam merely nodded, and quietly walked her horse up

and down, whilst the Lord of Kilsallaghan hastily retired to the harness-room to don a somewhat disreputable looking coat and soft cloth cap. In two minutes' time he reappeared outside the stable, leading old Chanticleer, a general utility sort of animal, which had played the part of school-master to the young ones, drawer of the dogcart, and even of that used for carrying turf, in his time. On this good old conveyance, his Lordship hoisted his twelve stone of manhood, and was quickly piloting his fair guest down to the ditch-and-bank-surrounded fields near the Castle.

'I only saw your master's advertisement early this morning, and as it was not a hunting day, came over at once,' said the lady; 'otherwise I should have written to say I was coming. My name is Adair—Mrs. Adair,' she added.

'Happy Mr. Adair,' thought Barry, with a sigh, as he stole a sidelong glance at the beautiful face so close to him.

'Does Lord Barry hunt this mare much?' asked Mrs. Adair, as they rode slowly along.

'Well, that and a raw brute of a three-year-old is all he's got to hunt,' answered the 'groom' grimly.

'Oh, indeed! I did not know. I thought perhaps he was a great hunting man.'

'He was, but now he can't afford much in the way of horse-flesh, and that's why the mare's for sale.'

'What do you know about her?' suddenly asked she, turning the full force of her lovely eyes on the 'groom.'

'Know about her!' burst forth Lord Barry. 'Why I bred her myself, broke her, taught her all she knows, and I don't believe there's her equal in all Ireland!'

Mrs. Adair laughed in a quiet manner all her own; then, with a suspicion of scornfulness in her tones, she said, 'Ah! that's the way with all you Irishmen. The particular horse you want to sell always is the best in Ireland—for the time being! Now, look here, my man, I don't want to bribe you, or anything of that sort, but whether I buy this mare or not, you shall have five pounds. But I don't want the bother of buying one that won't suit me, and then the still greater bother of selling it again, so tell me the truth about her. You look truthful,' coolly added Mrs. Adair, again fixing him with her eyes, full in the face.

Lord Barry began to think this joke of his had gone a little too far. He had got himself into a hole, and he did not see his

way out at all. He half thought he would 'own up' and ask Mrs. Adair's forgiveness. Then a feeling of shame came over him, and for the first time he saw that his conduct might have placed both her and himself in an even more awkward situation than that they now occupied. He thought the best thing would be to try and stall her off buying the mare, and so getting rid of her quickly. 'I don't think you would like her, madam,' he began in faltering tones. 'You see she—she isn't a lady's horse, and I don't think she would ——'

'Why, just now she was everything that was perfect,' sarcastically observed the fair equestrienne. 'I think I will try her for myself. Just give me a lead over that bank there, will you?'

Glad enough to do anything rather than face the task of either crying *mea culpa* and making confession, or continuing to invent things to the detriment of the good little mare, Lord Barry turned old Chanticleer's head at the obstacle indicated, leaped it, 'on and off,' Irish fashion, and Mrs. Adair immediately followed him over.

'No mistake about *her* being a performer!' muttered Lord Barry; but whether he meant the lady or the mare was not quite apparent. Two more obstacles were negotiated in like good style, and a short, sharp gallop indulged in, and then the two rode slowly back to the stables in silence. As Barry helped her to dismount at the stable door, he wondered how on earth the affair would end. Should he confess and apologise, or ——

'I shall buy this mare,' quietly observed Mrs. Adair. 'My groom will come over for her to-morrow morning, and bring a cheque for your master with him,' and, so saying, this vision of loveliness in dainty top-boots, faded from Lord Barry's gaze, or to speak more prosaically, got into her dogcart, drew the whip lightly across her high-stepping bay, and rapidly disappeared from view.

His Lordship strained his eyes to take in the last glimpse of his divinity, and then turned slowly away towards the stable. His mind was in a somewhat chaotic state—filled with equal parts of doubt, admiration, and uneasiness at the part he had played. Man-like, this confusion of ideas all resolved itself into one expression, 'D——n!' said his Lordship, quietly.

* * * *

A week had elapsed from the day that the Barry coffers had

been replenished by the paying into the bank of a cheque for 300*l.*, which document bore the signature of Helen Adair, when that lady herself, mounted on her new purchase, the chestnut mare, and accompanied by a smart-looking, well-turned-out man on a powerful black, were cantering up a deep muddy lane towards where, on the crest of an adjacent hill, the Allhallow Hounds were meeting. These two were new-comers to the country, staying at a little inn, some five miles from Kilsallaghan Castle. Strangers often threw in their lot with the Allhallow Foxhounds, attracted by the splendid stretch of country which they hunted, so their advent excited small remark. The Master greeted them cheerily, whilst all the Hunt servants respectfully capped them as they rode up.

Then a curious thing happened. Fighting furiously with his rider, arrived on the scene a raw, half-broken bay colt. Finding that a succession of buck-jumps exercised no earthly effect upon his human burden, he put his head down and lashed out viciously at a hound which came incautiously near his hind legs. Here, however, his rider quickly admonished him of the fact that although he took no notice of youthful exuberance, actual vice was a very different thing, and a couple of sharp reminders with a cutting whip told the colt pretty plainly that he must drop that sort of thing, and drop it he did, at once. Looking up from the horse to the man on him, Mrs. Adair recognised the 'groom' of Kilsallaghan Castle.

The recognition was mutual. Almost without being aware of what he was doing, Lord Barry raised his hat to the lady, and, at the self-same moment, became possessed of a feeling of intense hate for the good-looking man beside her. This must be Mr. Adair. An inquiry he made of the Master, later on, converted his guess into certainty. It was Mr. Adair. Barry heaved a sigh, and for the next half-hour—until they had found—felt full of sentiment of the 'it-might-have-been' order. Then he just said a swear word, coupled with the name of the lucky Adair, crammed his hat hard on to his head, and sat down in his saddle to bucket the awkward brute he was on, over the stiff obstacle that lay between him and the pack.

Mrs. Adair had been somewhat surprised to see the 'groom' at covert-side, and taking advantage of an opportune moment, she asked her companion to find out who the man on the young horse was. He nodded carelessly, and thought no more about it until, after a rattling burst of thirty-five minutes, their fox

gave them the slip, and horses had a chance to get their wind again.

The chestnut mare had more than realised her new owner's anticipations. Going with dash and resolution throughout, she had yet fenced so temperately as to exhibit a discretion beyond her years. Mrs. Adair was delighted. She patted the mare's neck approvingly, and then looked up to speak to her companion. 'Capital gallop! wasn't it, John? Have you heard anything about that man yet?'

'Yes. I asked the Master, and he told me it was Lord Barry.'

Mrs. Adair paused in the act of raising a small sandwich to her lips. 'Who?'

'Lord Barry, impecunious Irish landlord, don't you know,' he answered casually.

The sandwich dropped from the small gloved fingers, and Reveller promptly annexed it. Before another could be drawn from its silver refuge, a holloa from the top of the adjacent coppice, acted as a call to arms once more.

The huntsman twanged his horn and galloped off to the cry, quickly followed by the eager pack. First one, then three or four, simultaneously, owned the scent, and away they all went again at almost racing pace. Steadied down a little by his previous gallop, the awkward bay colt was now more amenable to reason, and with such a workman on his back as his owner, soon settled down to go. For a quarter of an hour the pace was a cracker. Then another fox jumped up and the pack divided, the Master and four couple of hounds going after the fresh quarry, whilst the huntsman with the bulk of the field, including Mr. Adair, held on to the right after the hunted fox.

Fate decreed that both Barry and Mrs. Adair should join the M.F.H.'s division, and for three-quarters of an hour the four couple ran as if they were tied to the fox in front of them. Then they suddenly threw up their heads, and a lot of slow hunting ensued. The Master made cast after cast when he found they could own it no longer, but it was some considerable time before they began travelling again. Finally, they had to give it up as a bad job, and then think whereabouts they had got to.

'Do you know where we are, Barry? This must be somewhere nearer your side of the country than mine,' quoth the

M. F. H., dubiously. Thus appealed to, Lord Barry answered that Kilsallaghan was not more than seven or eight miles from them, but that the kennels lay in the opposite direction, about twenty miles away.

The Master looked at his watch, pulled up his coat collar, and prepared to take the road indicated by Barry. Then he paused. 'Oh, by the way, you had better put Mrs. Adair in the way for home. Your roads lie together, and strangers find our country rather a difficult one. Let me introduce you—Lord Barry, Mrs. Adair,' and, blandly unconscious of the 'situation' he had just created, the Master calmly trotted off kennelwards, followed by his diminished pack.

Barry mechanically raised his hat for the second time that day to Mrs. Adair, who frigidly bowed. The two rode gently along in silence, for several minutes. It was Barry who spoke first. 'I—I—hope you like the mare,' he began, rather lamely.

'Yes, thank you. I like her very much.'

'I thought you would,' he went on, even more haltingly than before.

'Oh! I thought you were under the impression that she was not a lady's horse?'

Barry tried to laugh, but failed, and attempted to fill in an awkward hiatus by coughing. 'Well, she seems to suit you, anyhow,' he continued.

'But you said, before I bought her, that she wouldn't suit me at all,' replied she, maliciously, enjoying his discomfort.

Another silence, broken only by the regular ring of the tired horses' shoes on the road. The young 'un, too, added to poor Barry's intense disgust with himself and all mankind by playing a decided 'hammer and pincers' accompaniment as he went along.

At last Lord Barry could stand it no longer. Turning suddenly in his saddle, he exclaimed, 'Now look here, Mrs. Adair. Don't be too hard on a man, and especially on an Irishman, for having his little joke—a joke which was suggested to me all in a moment, by your own mistake—a very natural mistake, of course. But listen before you condemn. I'm too poor, and I'm not ashamed to own it, to keep men enough to look after the horses properly, and I have to do a lot to them myself. I don't know whether that shocks your Saxon sense of propriety. I hope and believe not. Now, I'm heartily sorry I carried my

joke so far, but the deuce and all of it is, that you never *can* pull up, just at the moment you wish to! Now I've said what I've been wanting to say any time this week past, and I feel all the better for it, will you forgive me?' And for answer, the little gloved right hand was frankly extended to him, and he bent his head over it with an old-world courtesy that not even the direst poverty could have robbed him of.

After this, the time passed all too quickly, until a turn in the road revealed the roof of the little Inn at which the Adairs were staying. Only another minute, and then he must make his farewells.

'I must soon come and call on your husband, Mrs. Adair,' he said, his gorge rising somewhat as he pronounced the word 'husband.' 'We can't entertain, but if ——'

'Call on John, you mean? Oh, he is not my husband. John Adair was my husband's cousin. He married my sister, and we are all stopping here together. I am a widow.'

Barry never quite knew how he parted with Mrs. Adair that night. He rode home on the wings of the wind. The raw bay colt was the pleasantest mount in the world. Now that he came to think of it, he found that he rather liked a horse to fight, tear, and racket about with hounds, and as to the 'hammer and pincers' business, the ceaseless click-clacking as he jogged along the road was sweet music in his ear!

* * * *

Now for a change of time and scene. It is a month later, and the soft April breeze is fanning alike the cheek of peer and peasant, as they toil up the side of the race hill to the 'coorse.' The hunt meeting is being held, and for the principal event, the Nevilstown Cup, we see hoisted on the board, the numbers of the following horses :—

Captain D'Arcy's Katera Boy	...	<i>Owner.</i>
Mr. Blake's Kathleen		<i>Mr. Blake, Junr.</i>
Mr. Handyside's Safety		<i>Owner.</i>
Mr. Handyside's Cobweb		<i>Mr. Moriarty.</i>
Mr. James Molony's Patsy		<i>Owner.</i>
Sir John Power's Wreath		<i>Owner.</i>
Mrs. Adair's Solitude		<i>Lord Barry.</i>
Major McGillicuddy's Rory		<i>Mr. Wygram.</i>

Lord Barry has not let the grass grow under his feet since the eventful night upon which he escorted the fair widow home.

Day after day has he been in constant attendance, and now he is about to ride her horse—once his own cherished darling—in the race for the Cup. Just at this moment he is thinking more of the mare than of her beautiful owner, for, saddle and weight-cloths on arm, he has thrown his whip on the floor of the weighing-room preparatory to seating himself in the scale. These formalities over, he walks sharply into the saddling paddock, and the gear being satisfactorily adjusted, receives a leg-up on to the chestnut mare, and walks her quietly down the course.

'The fee-ald a pony! fee-ald a pony! On the fee-ald I'll lay! 3 to 1 Wreath, 5 to 4 on the fee-ald!

'Arrah now, be aisy wid ye, Mike! The captain 'll be wantin' to bet wid meself, and not wid the likes o' you! Here, who'll have 10 to 1 any o' these outsiders? 5 to 4 on the fee-ald! Well, then 6 to 4 to *you*, sir, £6 to £4 Solitude. 8 to 1 Patsy, 8 to 1 Patsy! Kathleen? fives Kathleen,' &c. &c.

Undisturbed by the ceaseless clamour of the little betting ring Solitude walked calmly down past the Stand, until she had got well below the preliminary obstacle, then her rider, turning, took her gently, but firmly, by the head and sent her at it. Over she flew like a bird of the air, and then came along at a steady canter past the Stand again to the starting post.

Mrs. Adair, from the crest of the hill around which lay the track, was eagerly scanning every move of the horses as they got into position. A false start rather upset Solitude, who was quite new to the game, and probably disquieted in her mind as to why her old master should be wearing a silk jacket of blue with yellow sleeves, instead of his ordinary hunting kit. It may have also struck the intelligent animal as curious that they were apparently going to hunt without hounds. However, at the second attempt, the horses were dispatched on their journey, and Katera Boy at once rushed to the front, and cut out the work from Patsy and Kathleen, Solitude heading the rest, whilst the rear was brought up by Cobweb and Safety, side by side. The distance was three miles and a half, so that there was no desire to force the pace at the beginning. As they came thundering down at the first obstacle, Kathleen, a hot-headed, irritable black mare, suddenly whipped round, crossed Solitude, and knocked her right off her legs, horse and man rolling completely over, whilst, as usual, the aggressor escaped scot-free, but at once bolted out of the course.

A sound—half shout, half groan—went up from the stand,

announcing the favourite's downfall, thus early in the contest. Mrs. Adair had seen all from her vantage point, and stood for a moment speechless with horror for Barry's sake. Then she started to run down to the scene of disaster, but before going half-a-dozen steps, she gave a glad little cry, as she saw the man in the blue and yellow jacket rise to his feet again, just as the good little mare struggled up on to her own, gazing rather wildly about her as she did so. In less time than it takes to relate, Barry was again in the saddle. Without the smallest appearance of flurry or even haste, he took the chestnut back a few yards, and then sent her at the fence in a cool, confident manner which seemed to insensibly communicate itself to her. She manifested no sign of nervousness as she jumped, and Barry, affectionately patting her neck, as he rose in his saddle, to cross the next field, felt that he was not quite out of it, even then.

As an experienced horseman, he was far too clever to hurry his mare at first. The two succeeding 'leps' were surmounted whilst he just held, but did not attempt to gain on, his field. At this juncture he overtook and passed Katera Boy, who had hit his leg and gone lame. When over a third of the journey had been covered, he began to push the mare along a bit faster, and very soon got to within fifty yards of the tail horses. Barry began to notice now, for the first time, that his shoulder was very painful, and on trying to raise his arm, found that the process was quite beyond his power to accomplish. 'Collar-bone' was his solitary ejaculation. The mare was fencing and moving beautifully. Barry's chief concern now, was to see how the other horses were going, and to this end, he took a quick, but comprehensive look round.

Cobweb was leading, but already the fat little Moriarty who rode her, was feebly working his elbows up and down, and looking rather more done than his horse. There was little to be feared from that quarter. Rory was still going strongly, whilst Wreath was close up, her rider evidently meaning to try for 'one run' with her at the finish. Half a mile farther on, Cobweb, completely pumped out, fell at the brook, and rolled over her rider, and Solitude gradually caught and passed the others until, as they approached the final obstacle, only Rory and Wreath remained to be accounted for. Barry took a 'feeler' at the mare, and then went on after them at an increased pace, making up his ground very fast now. Already the shouting from the Stand and Ring sounded like the surging of the sea in the jockey's



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ears. Rory led over the last fence, closely followed by Wreath, Solitude now only about two lengths behind Sir John Power's mare. Then the leading horse men sat down to ride home 'for all they were worth.' The babel of shouts and screams from the excited onlookers beggars description. 'Rory wins!' 'Wreath walks in!' 'Wreath in a canter!' 'The little chestnut does it for a thousand!' 'Rory!' 'Wreath!' Whips crack, arms, hands, heels, all are at work in a final great struggle for victory, when Barry resolutely calls on his mare for a last effort. With unflinching gameness she answers to the call, and just getting up, two strides from home, beats Wreath by a short head, the latter finishing but the same distance in front of Rory who was third.

* * * *

Winning the race, and especially under such adverse circumstances, amply compensated Barry for his broken collar-bone. The hunting season was nearly at an end, so that he missed little in the way of sport. By way of exercise, whilst his left arm was carried in a sling, he took to rambling about 'in search of violets,' as he said—generally, if not always, accompanied by Mrs. Adair, and, strange to relate, he seemed to enjoy it even more than he did following hounds. Heterodox this, for an Irish fox-hunting man, but none the less true. Mrs. Adair, of course, took these walks from a strict sense of duty, for had not the sufferer sustained his injury in her service, and do we not know that the strict performance of duty is always sweet pleasure to every right-thinking woman?

At first their conversation had been chiefly of Barry's hurt, the chops and changes of the race, and of Solitude's most meritorious performance; then it had drifted into other channels, more interesting still.

One sunny April day, as they rested on a fallen tree trunk, Barry's uninjured arm, in some unaccountable manner, stole round her slender waist, whilst Barry's lips murmured something in her ear. There was only one little bird hopping about within hearing, but he might have distinctly caught the sound of a single word uttered in louder tones than the rest of the speech. It was the word 'adore.'

'But I thought it was only Solitude that you adored. You told me so, once.'

'Yes; but now I have changed my mind. What I really want, dearest, is a *Solitude à deux*!'

FOOTBALL IN AMERICA.

By 'CHAMELEON.'

IN olden days, when clouds hung low,
 And summer sports were past,
 Around the fire sat belle and beau
 Safe from the wintry blast.

Hunting was for the favoured class,
 Shooting to girls was barred,
 No bicycle was known, alas !
 For girls full sternly Ma'd.

Even the ice was deemed unfit,
 For strictly brought up maid,
 Lest by some sudden, careless trip,
 Trim ancles be displayed.

All now is changed, the dear girls can
 Enjoy with zest all games,
 And paralyse the average man
 With ethics new and strange.

I took my gentle Annabel
 To see the football game.
 And thus unto a friend of her's,
 Did she describe the same :

‘ Oh, May, you should have seen them play,
 ’Twas such a lovely sight !
 Although the first game I had seen
 I understood it quite.

‘ First came the Yale, all dressed in blue,
 Then Harvard came in red,
 One fellow yelled, the rest all tried
 To jump upon his head.

‘ And then one fellow stopped and stooped,
 And all the rest got round ;
 And every fellow stopped and stooped,
 And looked hard at the ground.

‘ And then another fellow yelled,
 And each man where he stood,
 Just bit, and struck, and knocked, and kicked
 At every one he could.

'And then one man fell on his face,
 And all the others ran,
 And on his prone and prostrate form
 Jumped every blessed man !

'We scarcely saw the ball at all,
 It seemed their only aim
 To see which side could bruise and maul
 The other. 'Twas a shame !

'And then the ambulance came forth,
 And loading up with men,
 With twisted necks and broken lungs,
 Went driving off again.

'They said the game was "won," or "one,"
 But why I never knew,
 Unless because there only was
One sound man left on view.

'Oh, football's just the 'cutest game !
 It cannot be surpassed ;
 But yet it really is a shame
 To use men up so fast !'

* * * * *

The season of our youth is past !
 Our blood grows thin and cold,
 Old *sports* are *war*—the age moves fast—
 What does the future hold ?

SPORT, INDEED !

By 'PECKWATER.'

CHAPTER I.—A VARIED BAG.



YES! this I do call sport,' my friend Trimmer exclaimed, when I had arranged the items of our varied bag on the slabs in my farmhouse larder. I felt rather proud of our morning's performance, and more than satisfied at having taken down my oracular friend a notch or two. There is no better fellow going than my dear old Trimmer, still he is one of those aggravating sort of mortals who thinks he can set people right in everything they undertake. A keen and successful man of business, he

has of late years taken up sport of several kinds. Shooting he especially affects, and this he pursues on the principle of game I will have, and everything, from the bird in the air to the creeping thing on the ground, that interferes with it must be systematically annihilated. Trimmer always invites me to help to shoot his coverts in return for the partridge shooting I give him in September; but I do not often avail myself of his kindness, for I must confess I have the bad taste to be quite indifferent to the pleasure and excitement of these 'big shoots.' I had, however, lately been his guest for his first battue in November, and had incurred his grave displeasure at the warmest corner of the beat by neglecting for a few minutes to shoot at the birds which were being driven up in front of me in quick succession. I had killed some half dozen, and then I quite forgot myself, and looked on in a sort of helpless amazement at the mass of glossy plumage striving to top the thick fir-trees of the plantation. 'Why the —— don't you shoot? you have let at least a score pass you!' from my host, recalled me to the duties of my position, and I blazed away again with, to me, wearying iteration, until the corner was cleared of its refugees. Now it was time for a sumptuous luncheon, and I was unsparingly chaffed by Trimmer and his friends for my star-gazing propensities. 'I only wish I had been in your place when that grand rise came off,' one of the party remarked, 'I should have killed at least fifteen head more.'

I had seen this individual miss several easy shots running, so I replied, good-humouredly, 'It was lucky for the birds that we had not exchanged positions,' and for the rest of the afternoon I stationed myself on the extreme outsides, contenting myself with taking any single rocketers that had run the gauntlet of the other guns.

After our dinner, Trimmer had proposed a visit to my farm at Fleetwood, for a purpose that will be explained further on, to which I readily assented, and said laughingly, 'If you will bring your gun, I can show you some sport on the low-lying parts of my farm near the river which, to my mind, beats all this fast and furious work into fits.'

'I bar that beastly ferreting you are so fond of, and then I shall be curious to see what your wonderful beat can show in return for wet feet and utter discomfort after paddling about among your swamps and osier beds; a jack snipe or two and a moorhen, I expect, will be about the bag. However, I will come

over early, and we can have a walk before the real business of the afternoon comes on,' Trimmer replied, evidently thinking he was conferring no slight favour on me by accepting my suggestion.

An early day was fixed upon, and after inspecting the tenants of the loose boxes and stalls (for I both bred and trained horses at Fleetwood, as my farm was named), and the feeding bullocks in the yards, with other objects of interest, we started on our walk.

'By-the-bye, have you some really good cider, and have you killed a pig?' Trimmer inquired earnestly, as we were starting off. I assured him on both points. 'Ah! that's something to look forward to. I have brought a thorough change with me, and when I come to a farmhouse I like regular farmhouse fare. A nice roast spare-rib, now, would fit in well after our walk. Eh?'

'My housekeeper will have something of the sort ready for us, I'm sure,' I replied, and then my friend seemed resigned to his self-imposed penance. I had let loose my brace of spaniels, although I knew from old experience that Trimmer hated shooting over dogs.

'Ah! those spaniels may be useful to-day,' he said, grimly, as they came bounding round us, declaring with their short, musical notes how delighted they were to have their liberty. I always shoot over pointers or these spaniels, except when my friend honours me with his company, and then I find it best to give into his whims. In September he would say, 'What on earth is the use of walking oneself to death beating all these stubbles and fallows and hardly ever getting a shot till the birds are driven into the turnips? then the fun begins, but one is too tired to shoot steadily. Why not let half a dozen men and boys do all this drudgery, and reserve oneself for the cream of the thing?'

'Because,' I explained, 'half the pleasure of shooting consists in seeing my dogs do their work and find the game, and the other process is simply pot-hunting, from my point of view at least.' So, although I had a brace of pointers in my kennel it was a delight to shoot over, I let my friend have his way, and he with a large retriever and I with one of my spaniels at heel would simply walk from one turnip field to another, and have the birds driven in for us by beaters. Well, this subject has recently been dealt with in this magazine, so I will not further

enlarge upon it, except to express my opinion that he who does not understand the habits and haunts of game, and goes in for mere slaughter of it, is far removed from being a good sportsman.

I took up one dog on entering a large field of rape and turnips, on which some two hundred Down teggs were folded, and let the other dog, Rover by name, run loose. We soon had a couple of brace of birds down, which Rover retrieved admirably. Trimmer owed this dog a grudge since one day last September, when he found more than one dead bird which his own grand, high-priced retriever had passed over, nor was it long before he had a chance of paying him out. A single bird got up wild, a long shot for Trimmer, and he just tipped its wing, as I could see plainly.

‘That bird is dead,’ he at once declared.

Rover saw the bird drop and went straight to the place when I bade him fetch it, then, without a moment’s hesitation, he rushed off to the hedgerow.

‘Ah! the brute is chasing fur, he won’t look for the bird!’ Trimmer shouted, so we walked up and looked about among the turnips ourselves.

‘This is the worst of spaniels, you can’t depend on them if a rabbit gets up,’ he was saying, when Rover came back to us with the bird in his mouth, which he gave up into my hand alive. ‘Ah! a clever dog in his way, found this runner in the hedgerow; my bird fell dead, I’m sure,’ was all the credit my pet got for his clever work, so I walked on and said nothing.

The hedgerows on our way gave us plenty of shooting at rabbits, of which we had killed some four couples before we reached the low-lying ground, where our real sport began. My friend Trimmer, I must admit, is a most jealous shot, and claims every doubtful bird that falls, so I give him as wide a berth as possible at all times. I now kept both dogs to heel, and we approached the first lot of pools upwind. We had had several hardish frosts during the week, and I had every hope that some wild fowl would have arrived, nor was I disappointed. From the first of the pools (which, I must explain, were formerly dug out for brickmaking, but since locks and weirs had been introduced, the pits had become flooded and overgrown with reeds and rushes for several acres in a place) a couple of ducks rose; Trimmer fetched the mallard down in good style, but missed the duck. He then killed a widgeon, and I meantime on the

far side had bagged a couple of teal, the rest of the flock making for some pools higher up, where we succeeded in getting another couple. So far our sport had been all I desired, and my spaniels had proved their general usefulness in water as well as on dry land. The mallard was rather too much for the smaller dog to bring to hand; but his companion, who showed more of the water-spaniel in his breed and shape, found no difficulty with a bird of this weight.

We now began operations on the snipey portion of the beat. This was higher lying ground planted with osiers in beds, intersected by trenches full of water; the osiers had just been cut, and all was open and made easy. The early frosts had warned the snipe to move southwards, and these secluded soaks offered them acceptable feeding grounds and halting places on their long journey. I pointed out to my companion the most likely beat to take, but to my disgust he could not touch a feather. Bang! bang! and miss, miss, followed, until I determined to join him and walked alongside him. I had killed a couple of snipe on the far side, and now crossed the beds and came up with him. Twice running I wiped his eye. After the last shot he pulled up with, 'I say, Ned! you needn't shoot jealous like this. Both those birds were falling to my gun when you shot.'

Well, this is delicious, I thought. I made no reply, but took a wider beat, and then had the satisfaction of seeing my friend pick up three birds out of thrice as many shots. Before we left the ground we had six couples of snipe, and should have bagged at least twice as many if Trimmer had been in anything like good form. He shot too quickly, as I told him.

'Well, I must have another turn at these twisting little chaps, he replied, evidently much pleased with the sport, and then, as a *finale*, out of some rough reeds and osiers on the bank the dogs put out a hare, which Trimmer killed, and a brace of pheasants, which had strayed from the preserves over the river, fell to his right and left, and made a grand and effective wind up to our morning's shooting. Thus we were able to enumerate—pheasants, 2; partridges, 5; mallard, 1; teal, 4; widgeon, 1; snipe, 6 couples; hare; and rabbits not counted.

During my many years residence at Fleetwood I had seldom beaten the whole of these osier beds and pools in one day. My usual custom was to try for a few shots in one or two of them,

and if I secured a couple of wild fowl or so and a few snipe I was satisfied, for the visits of these game birds being so dependent on weather and temperature, I did not think it worth while asking friends to run the chance of failure; still, it was just this uncertainty which gave an extra charm to this kind of sport, and I was delighted at being fortunate enough to prove to my friend that blazing away at hand-reared pheasants was not the only sport worth following in this land of ours.

With this he now quite agreed, and the way he pitched into the roast spare-rib and fowl (of which he had conjured up a vision in the morning) showed that the damp ground and fear of wet feet had not impaired his appetite. After a swig at my cider cup he looked at me and, with a smack of his lips, declared, 'Young man! this is worth living for!'

Yes, it was indeed very pretty tippie, and proved how delicious is this national beverage when care and skill are used in its production. Indeed, it is no wonder that the farm labourers in the cider districts grumble at being deprived of it by the meddlesome legislation of a set of busybodies who are supposed to represent national opinion in our Imperial Parliament. We had just time for a pipe and a little cordial to qualify the cider, when we had to prepare ourselves for the afternoon engagement.

CHAPTER II.—A HOME GALLOP.

THE sedate and austere Trimmer is, secretly, passionately fond of racing. 'Who would have thought it?' I fancy I hear one of the goody-goodies of Severnham, his native town, exclaim. He always has business in town during the Epsom and Ascot weeks; then his seaside holidays in July, and his ten days 'on the moors' in September, may confidentially be interpreted visits to Goodwood and Doncaster.

For several years past he has had horses of his own running, and with fair success, until he had conceived the feeble idea of training them near home; he thought his horses did not receive proper attention in a large stable, and if he had them nearer home and under his own eyes things would go more satisfactorily. I pointed out to him that he could not expect a first-class trainer to take charge of such a small string as his—five were the outside that he would have at work—nor could he afford to pay a reliable man a sufficient salary to make it worth his while to undertake the job. This difficulty

he, however, soon overcame, as he thought successfully; he engaged a semi-professional and nominally a gentleman rider named John Harper as trainer, and to ride in hurdle-races or steeplechases if required, allowing him to ride also for his old patrons and to take in some horses which he said belonged to a professional man in London. These horses really belonged to Mr. James Wheeler, the Severnham bookmaker, and his set.

Trimmer leased some good stables at Blackmoor, seven miles below Severnham, near which was some fair training ground when the season suited, but apt to be too wet in winter and to get hard and baked in very hot weather, from which drawback his horses' legs soon suffered. Besides, his trainer was constantly away from home, and Trimmer soon found out that his snug little establishment was the favourite resort during an afternoon of the sporting fraternity from Severnham, who knew a vast deal more about his horses than he, Trimmer, did himself.

Trimmer had determined to go in for cross-country stakes now, and a five-year-old horse he had bought for a large sum had proved a good investment by winning the Grand National Hunt race of the year, and a Midland steeplechase as well. This horse I shall call 'Ruby.' After these successes, Ruby must be entered for the Liverpool Grand National, for which his owner and the Midland public backed him heavily; but the pace and the distance were both too much for him, and he finished nowhere. Trimmer was furious, vowed his horse had been squared, discharged his trainer and put in his place a steady young fellow, quite as good a rider as Jack Harper, whom I had recommended to him at first.

Trimmer did not like losing his cash. Ruby had been doing strong work all the autumn, and his owner had decided to run him for the big chase at Severnham in the middle of November, and now he wanted me to give him a private trial over my course at Fleetwood, so this was the real object of his visit to me this morning. He wished me to ride my mare, Sweetsauce, to make running for two miles or so, and he would bring a reliable trial horse of his own, Phoebus by name. Sweetsauce had just won a hunter's stake on the flat, and was a nailer over a country for three miles, so we had a fair chance of finding out if Ruby was worth backing for the Severnham chase. I had a capital

course laid out; no one could approach it except by the private road past my house, unless they came up the river in a boat. Towards the end of the course where we usually finished, the river ran within a hundred yards of us, but there was no path on my side, and it would require great cleverness on the part of any tout to reach the only point of advantage, viz., some Lombardy poplars growing on the river bank, without our seeing him; but, from one of these trees the greater part of my gallop, the finish included, might be watched without obstruction. I had been warned by my friend to be sure to guard against any touts, especially against a man in James Wheeler's employment. Trimmer had now made an enemy of this bookmaker by accusing him of having nobbled Ruby for the Liverpool. This I had assured Trimmer was absurd. Wheeler was judge enough to know the horse had no chance in such company, and laid against him incessantly. He knew Ruby was equal to pulling off a good race if properly placed, and was determined to find out the horse's form this autumn.

This he made no secret of even to me; he and I had always been the best of friends, and only the day before this when I was in Severnham market he had said jokingly, 'You are going to try Ruby over your gallop at Fleetwood, are you? Mind, I shall be somewhere handy. It is too good a thing to miss, I can assure you.' 'This is only a feeler,' I thought; still, it gave me the idea that Wheeler knew more of our plans than we imagined, and so he did, for his commissioner, whom we styled 'the Doctor,' had succeeded in finding out every detail of our plan. A horse-box had been sent the day before to Blackmoor Station, and was to be dispatched, containing two horses, to a station beyond Severnham, about four miles from my farm on the other side of the river, the next morning. They would have to cross the river by a bridge, a mile or so above Fleetwood, and should arrive about midday. All this the Doctor had ferreted out; it only remained for him to set a watch near Trimmer's stables in Severnham to notice if he drove away from the town, and if he took the road to Fleetwood it might be taken for granted what his object would be. This Trimmer did, and brought his trainer, who was to ride the trial horse, in his dog-cart, thereby giving the confederates a certain clue to the mystery.

I had set a man to patrol the river-side with strict orders

to notice if any boat came up our way, and while we were shooting I could see that he was doing as I told him.

This man, nicknamed 'the Ranger,' had been an arrant poacher, and in league with the gang in Severnham, of which the Doctor, the tout we feared, was the head. I took the Ranger on as vermin-catcher and watcher, because I was told that so long as he held with the town gang they would leave my game alone, and so they did for some years until this season; but in September I had lost several coveys of birds, which my man declared had been taken by the Doctor and his party while he had been called off on a false alarm to the other side of the beat. There had been a quarrel among them, and now the Doctor and the Ranger were deadly enemies, and my man vowed he would do for his adversary if ever he caught him on our ground. He was an awkward customer to tackle, and quite capable of carrying his threats into execution. I had told him what the Doctor's game would be that afternoon, and on hearing it he declared, if he could, he would drown him in the river. The horses had arrived safely, and the riders had walked over the ground, but when we were getting ready to start I saw the Ranger coming towards us. We were to start in the winning field only separated by a narrow belt of osiers from the river bank, and so far I had seen nothing to alarm us. As my man drew near I saw by his boozy look what he had been up to.

'I thought I told you not to leave the river bank!' I roared at him.

'Well, it's no harm coming to see the race, now!' he replied, defiantly.

'Yes! and you have been spending the afternoon at the "Ferry Boat," I can see!' This was a public house on the river bank some little distance below me.

'Of course I went in to see who was there, but I left a boy on the bank to watch, and he said only a fisherman's punt had gone by with two men paddling up in it. They could do no harm!' he said, sulkily.

'Couldn't they? One of your fishermen was the Doctor, I'll warrant, and now he's up in one of those poplar-trees for certain.' I had got my glasses, and with their aid I could just make out something blue crouching in the fork of one of the poplar-trees. 'Yes, I saw an arm move! It's the Doctor for a hundred!' I exclaimed.

'Is it, by ——! I'll have him out of it, then!' And the Ranger moved off at the double towards his enemy.

Several of my workmen had come near us by this time, and we all followed Ranger as fast as we could. As we drew near, we could hear the Doctor chaffing his former pal. 'A pretty feller you are to be set to watch any one, and a fine keeper too; I had about a score brace of your birds one night, and I'll strip the place another year,' he was saying. This he accompanied with a shy at the Ranger with a piece of rotten wood, which hit him in the mouth just as he was about to reply. 'Ha! ha!' laughed the Doctor, but the Ranger did not wait for anything more. He was an active, wiry fellow, and up the tree he swarmed, and soon reached the fork where the Doctor was seated. The tree overhung the river, and the fisherman's boat was moored to the stem.

'I'll kick you into the water if you come any nearer!' the Doctor shouted; but his adversary did not hesitate, notwithstanding a smashing kick he received in his chops. In a second they were grappling one another, and in another they crashed from the tree into the deep water below them. Up they came spluttering, locked together, close to the boat, which one of them happened to clutch hold of, and into it the fishermen and others managed to haul them. Our man soon recovered, but the Doctor seemed badly hurt; he had struck the bows of the boat in his fall, and said his ribs were smashed. Trimmer gave him some brandy from his flask which revived him a little, and then we wrapped him in horse-rugs, and sent him off down the stream in the boat to the inn on the river bank under the charge of the fisherman and another man, while I sent off to the surgeon who lived in the village, asking him to hurry down to the 'Ferry Boat,' and do what was needful for the injured man.

After this tree and water fight had concluded, we were able to bring off our gallop without further hindrance. I made the pace as strong as I could for over two miles, but made no impression on Ruby, who galloped on after I was done with, and beat his stable companion easily; he had also by far the worst of the weights, so the performance was a highly satisfactory one, and in a fortnight's time we had the pleasure of seeing him come in a gallant winner at Severnham, thus recouping his owner for previous disappointments, and confirming the opinion he so firmly adhered to, 'that with

fair play he ought to have won the Grand National.' The Doctor's injuries proved to be far more serious than we first imagined, so for more than a week he was confined to his bed at the 'Ferry Boat.' 'I thought I had slipped that Ranger nicely,' he said. He was terribly crestfallen at having missed the trial, so to cheer him up I promised to let him stand in with me to 5*l.* if we backed the horse, and in return he declared he would leave my game alone in future. But the most amusing part of the play was still in store for me, and this was developed on my meeting with the Doctor's master, James Wheeler. I purposely threw myself in his way several times during the week following.

'So the trial came off all right,' he remarked, on the first occasion.

'Oh, yes! but I did not see you there!' I replied.

Next day he asked, 'What have you done with the Doctor?'

'Sent him down the river with a brick-bat round his neck,' I answered. 'You'll find him just above the weir at Severnham if you have the river dragged,' I added. At last, on Wheeler declaring he would set the police to try and discover his man's whereabouts, I told him he would find the Doctor at the 'Ferry Boat' inn, at least what was left of him, and he had better inform the coroner and hold an inquest on his remains, and I also advised him the next time he sent a tout to Fleetwood by water to send one who could swim or provide him with a life-belt.

Several times during the coming winter and afterwards, Trimmer came over to Fleetwood to beat my marshes as he called them, but somehow we never had such luck as on this November morning. It often happened that when I was sure wild fowl had arrived Trimmer would be unable to come over, or we should find a nice lot of snipe and no other game—any way, this particular morning with the exciting incidents of the succeeding afternoon was ever fresh in our memories as the one occasion on which we had enjoyed 'Sport indeed.'

HE WOULD BE A SPORTSMAN.

By FINCH MASON.



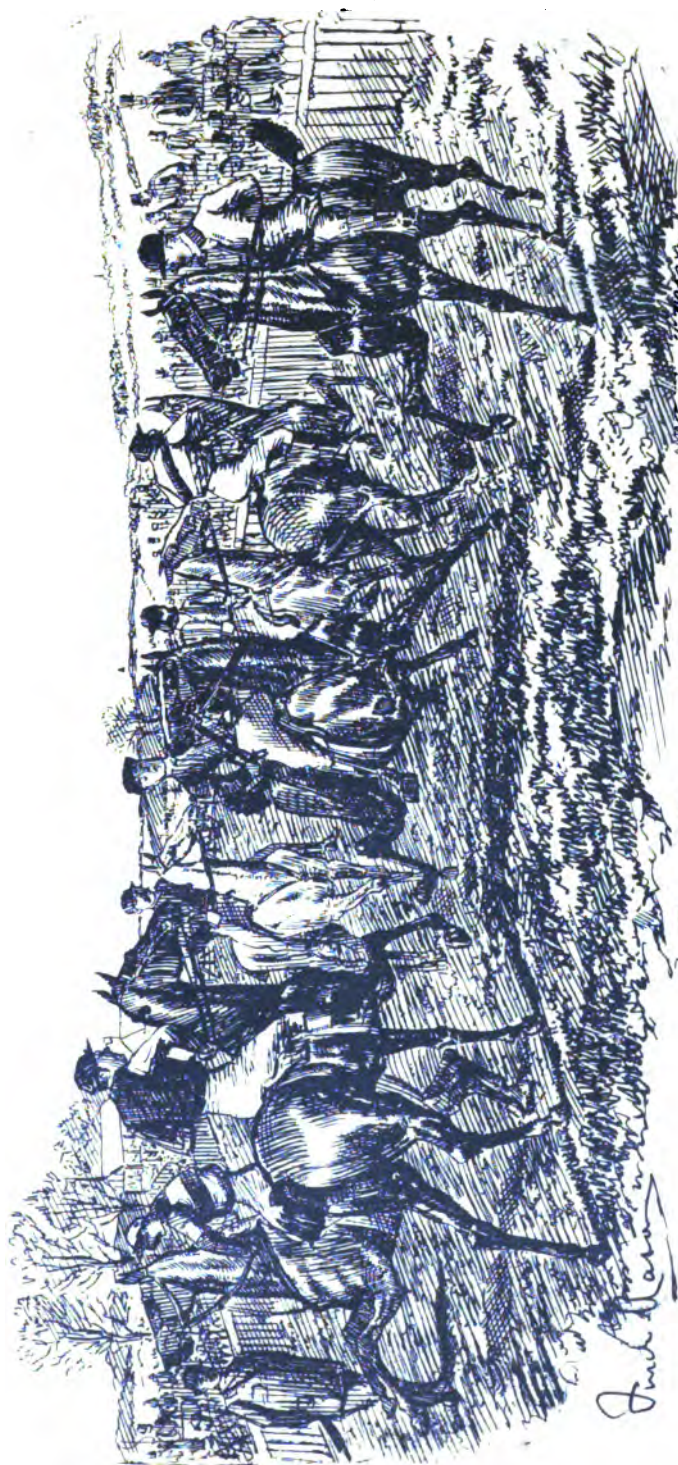
ES, there was no mistake about it ; Mrs. Barker Browne was disappointed — bitterly disappointed. To think that she had devoted all her time and energies, for the last twenty years, to the bringing up of her beloved and only son William, with one special object in view all the while, that object being for her darling, upon arriving at years of discretion, to enter the Church, and now for him, after his very first term at Oxford, to turn round on her, his mother, on her gently alluding to the subject one day after breakfast, and replying in the most rude, not to say cruel manner, ‘ Oh, Church be blowed, mother ! ’

The Widow Browne nearly fainted on the spot. Nothing, indeed, but a prolonged sniff at her gold-topped scent-bottle, which luckily lay handy, saved her.

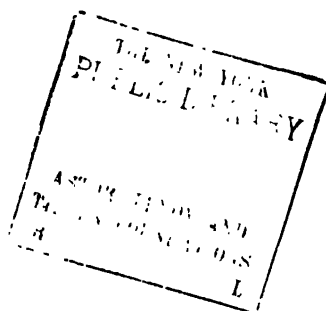
‘ Then, w—w—what profession do you think you *would* like to adopt, dear William ? ’ the poor lady tremblingly inquired, as soon as she was able to control her feelings sufficiently to speak.

‘ I intend to be a sportsman, and nothing else,’ replied her hopeful son, stretching out his legs and arms as far as they would go, and indulging in a hearty yawn. ‘ All my “pals” at Christ-church, Shortwhist, Reggy Rattlebone, and the whole blessed lot of ‘em, are sportsmen, and don’t ever intend being anything else, so why shouldn’t I follow suit ? Oh, and by the way, mother,’ he added, ‘ I wish you’d drop calling me “William.” It is such a confounded tame-rabbity, “curatey” sort of name, don’t you know. All the men of my set call me “Bill” or “Billy,” so I shall be much obliged if you will do the same in future, if you don’t mind very much.’

The widow *did* mind, very much indeed ; but she merely heaved a deep sigh, wiped away a tear, and replied, though the words nearly choked her as she uttered them, ‘ Very well, “Billy,” whatever you wish, my dear.’ And dear Billy, well satisfied at the result of the conversation, rose from the sofa upon which he had been sprawling, gave himself a hearty shake, and with a ‘ta-ta, mother,’ slouched out of the room to indulge in what



And then in his own way —
Rags o' More distinguishes himself. —



he was pleased to term 'a soother,' in other words a quiet cigar.

As for poor Mrs. Browne, as soon as her recalcitrant son's footsteps had died away she tottered to the door, and thence to her bedroom, where she proceeded to relieve her feelings in the manner usually adopted by suffering females, viz., indulging in 'a good cry,' following it up with an extra strong dose of that never-failing restorative, red lavender and sal volatile.

The effect these two simple remedies had on the distressed lady was astonishing. She wiped away her tears, flopped herself down in an easy-chair, and, after ruminating for the space of exactly four minutes and three-quarters (I like being accurate), beating the devil's tattoo on the carpet with her foot the while, she started up with a delighted clap of her hands, and a shrill little laugh of triumph. A brilliant idea had struck her.

'So you decline to enter the Church in deference to your mother's wishes, and intend to set up as a sportsman instead, do you, my sweet William—I beg your pardon, I am sure—my beloved *Billy—Silly Billy*—he, he' (the widow gave another shrill little laugh at her own joke); 'well, so you shall, my dear; I won't stand in your way, you may depend, for a single instant. So begin at once, my son, the sooner the better.' And so saying, the widow rose from her chair, went to the looking glass, gave her cap a twist, and her face a dab with the powder puff, and walked downstairs humming a tune, with all the appearance of a lady on the best possible terms with herself, which indeed she was.

That night at dinner her hopeful son William, or Billy, as he preferred to be called, was considerably astonished at the turn the conversation took. He could hardly believe his own ears indeed when, dropping matters connected with the Church altogether, his mother proceeded to discuss sport with him in all its branches, as if she had had rather an interest in it all her life. As for Billy, she evidently intended him to go the 'whole hog'—the entire pig, as Mr. Jorrocks would call it—shooting, fishing, hunting, steeple-chase riding, he must distinguish himself in one and all.

Finally, carried away by her own enthusiasm, she drew such a vivid picture, *à la* Ouida, of the delights of flying over enormous posts and rails, bottomless brooks, and huge bullfinches, that Billy felt quite uncomfortable at last, and fidgetted visibly in his chair.

'Hang it all!' he thought to himself; 'you're a bit too keen, mother mine.'

'The spell is beginning to work already,' thought his mother, noting the action. And shortly after, she rose from the table and left the embryo Nimrod to his own reflections. 'My poor Silly Billy,' she murmured to herself, as, reaching the drawing-room, she sank into the depths of an armchair in front of the fire, 'I shall live to see you a Bishop yet, or I'm very much mistaken, in spite of your sporting friends.'

With the exception, perhaps, of our old friend Mr. Verdant Green, a milder youth than the hero of our story was probably never entered on the University books. His father, an eminent drysalter, dying when Billy was only two years old, his mother determined to bring him up on a system of her own. As part of this system was not to send him to school, but to have him educated at home by masters and mistresses, under her own eye, and to prohibit all conversation with youths of his own age, for fear of corrupting his morals in any way, it may be imagined that he would require a deal of rubbing up against university bricks, before they succeeded in making a man of him. Mr. Verdant Green, it will be remembered, had the good fortune to be admitted at once into a first-rate set, though by no means a slow one. Billy Browne on the contrary, was rather unlucky in that respect, the set he succeeded in getting into being as fast as you please, without the other advantage. As it was, it was his money entirely that procured him the *entrée* of the very 'so-so' lot of men he cast in his lot with, his personal appearance being about on a par with his social qualities. Like many of us, he was a great believer in the live lord, his manners and customs, and being very much impressed with the general deportment and mode of living of those two eminent lights of the university, the Viscount Shortwhist and the Hon. Reginald Rattlebone, he took them for his models in everything, including their dress, being under the impression that by so doing he could not possibly be wrong.

The Peer and the Honourable did not raise the slightest objection to sitting, as it were, as models to their friend. On the contrary, they returned the obligation by borrowing Billy's money and horses, and drinking his wine on all occasions in the most affable manner possible, like the good fellows they were.

Billy in his regulation once a week letter to his mother, never

forgot to mention Shortwhist and Reggy Rattlebone, you may be sure. His delight, when the Peer first addressed him as 'Billy,' it would be impossible to describe.

His smart friends asked him one day what profession, if any, he intended to adopt. The commoner replied—with a blush you may be sure—that he *believed* he was intended for the Church.

'The doose you are!' exclaimed the Hon. Reggy. 'The Church, eh? Precious *low* Church, I should imagine. Well, every man to his taste. I'd sooner be an organ-grinder, wouldn't you, Shortwhist?'

'*Sooner!*' replied the Peer, with a snort of disgust. No wonder, after hearing the opinion of these great and good men, that their pupil should look upon the profession his mother had chosen for him with an unfavourable eye. Poor Billy!

PART II.

BILLY BROWNE had now been following the calling he had mapped out for himself over a year, and with the result that his mother was more than satisfied, if her son was not. He had, in fact, tried 'sport' in all its branches, and the more he saw of it, the less he liked it. What else could he expect? He knew nothing whatever about country life of any description, and, until he went to Christchurch, had never come across any one who had. He had never been on a horse, or handled a gun, or a fishing-rod, or a cricket-bat, and now he expected to learn the business all at once, and like the fun. He quickly found out his mistake, and would have 'cut it' altogether, but for the banter of his friends, and, what was a good deal more galling, the quiet sarcasm of his mother. Her pleasant greeting, after his return from partridge shooting, of 'Well, dear, I hope you had a good day. Did you shoot well? *Did* he shoot well, Mr. Rattlebone?'

'Oh, first rate!' would reply the Honourable; 'killed a rabbit, didn't you, Billy?' And then he and Mrs. Browne would go into fits of laughter at poor Billy's expense, making him feel for the moment like a murderer.

He would come back from hunting, too, with his red coat bearing every evidence of having come into contact with mother earth, as indeed it had, for Billy never got off without a tumble of some sort during the day, and his mother would be sure to run up against him—accidentally, of course—as he was *en route* to his room, when she would hold up her hands in horror, exclaiming,

'What, *another* fall! Oh, Billy, *dear*!' And then she would go on in the same strain. Should she send for a doctor? She was sure he felt ill. Some brandy, then? No?—making Billy, oh, so wild!

The gentleman originally intended for the Church would retire growling to his bedroom, using language the reverse of parliamentary, let alone clerical, and ring furiously for his servant, who had a bad quarter of an hour of it, you may depend, on these occasions.

Somehow or another, try all he knew, he couldn't ride, and he couldn't shoot, and he couldn't fish—he couldn't be a sportsman, in fact, however much he would. But he wasn't going to acknowledge the fact just yet awhile, for all that—oh, dear, no! there was a good deal of the bulldog about Billy Browne, muffed as he was. He must, indeed, have had a certain amount of pluck about him, to stand the rough usage he had met with in pursuit of sport, during the two years he had indulged in it. The falls he had got out hunting, to say nothing of the abuse he had received from the several masters of hounds whose meets he had honoured with his presence, his absolute inability ever to kill anything which met his gun or rod, his ignominious performances in the cricket-field and on the river, and the amount of chaff he received thereat, would have thoroughly disheartened nine men out of ten, long ago. So consistently bad were his displays in this direction, that he had given up both amusements some time since. He had also abandoned in despair, driving, and the noble art of self-defence.

Having purchased a coach, with all the latest improvements, bought a first-class team, and taken a few lessons from that eminent professor Mr. Ward, he volunteered to drive a select party of friends of either sex down to Richmond one fine day.

Alas! they only got as far as Piccadilly, in the centre of which he let down the two leaders with a bang, his load showing their sense, I think, by preferring to finish the journey by rail.

His connexion with the ring lasted an equally short time.

Having provided the wherewithal for a *protégé* of his to fight another aspiring candidate for pugilistic honours, he and a few friends arranged for a little real enjoyment in the shape of a 'mill' to take place one afternoon, in a retired yard down Bermondsey way. It turned out a dreadful fiasco. To begin with, his villainous *protégé* sold the fight, thereby losing his patron

several hundred pounds, and, by way of a finish, the 'boys' broke into the place, and went for the swells right and left. As for poor Billy, they held him up and stripped him of every article of jewellery and money he had about him. Finally the police arrived, and took all their names and addresses.

And now he was going to try his 'prentice hand at the most dangerous amusement of all, viz., steeplechase-riding. He had of course done a deal of racing, had even made a book on the Leger, with most disastrous results; but he had never yet *ridden* in a race of any sort, much less a steeplechase; nor had he the slightest intention of doing so, until that night at Jack Thornton's, where—after dinner, of course—he promised to enter his horse 'Rory o' More' in the Tally-Ho Steeplechase, at the Harkaway Hunt meeting.

Billy would have shuffled out of it if he could, had not pretty Laura Larkspur got hold of him, and insisted on his riding, as she had backed him for 'Oh! so many pairs of gloves!' and he was dreadfully gone on the fair Laura. Had she not promised to work his racing jacket for him, too—white and pink sleeves?

The day to which our hero looked forward with fear and trembling came at last. Fine, thank goodness! but terribly cold.

'Why, oh, why, do they hold steeplechase meetings in March?' said poor Billy to himself, as he cantered down the course, his teeth chattering, and his eyes running with the cold, and Rory O'More pulling like the deuce, rasping the skin off his knuckles against his withers.

The old horse liked the east wind evidently as little as his rider did, for he shook his head and shied at everything he saw, tried to bolt, and finally, when he went at the preliminary hurdle, jumped it as if it were a haystack, thereby shooting poor Billy on to his neck, and all but sending him to ground. He then bolted, cannoning in his career first against some of the other riders, whose language was of the most pagan description in consequence, and finally against a hunt servant keeping the course, who laid hold of him and led him to the post, thereby earning Billy's gratitude for life.

At last they were off. Rory O'More, whose dander was up in earnest by now, with a rear and a plunge, snatching the reins from his rider's benumbed fingers and going off best pace. Away he tore, many lengths in front of his field; so far ahead

did he get that the spectators thought he would never be headed. But Rory had no intention of doing a bit more work than he fancied. He had shot his rider on to his neck at every fence up to now ; he determined when the brook came to shoot him off altogether.

On they came amidst the cheers of the multitude. 'Oh ! if I can *only* stick on !' groaned poor Billy, now quite exhausted. His hands are so cramped that he can't feel the reins ; he can only stick on with his knees and trust to Providence to pull him through. He is close now to the thorn fence with that nasty muddy water just beyond.

Now for it !

What has happened ? A sudden jerk, a rush through the air, a loud splash, and a cry from Billy of 'Help ! help ! I'm drownin' !'

'Heads ! Tuck in your tuppenny ! *Duck*, you fool !' roar the laughing spectators in reply. Poor Billy does duck involuntarily, just as the other horses clear the brook in style, him and all.

Finally, he was ignominiously lugged out of his mud bath more dead than alive, amid the jeers of the multitude.

Rory O'More had refused at the brook, chucked his rider carefully over his head, and then, turning tail, bolted off to his stable as hard as ever he could go.

* * * * *

That same evening the Widow Browne was half asleep in an armchair, in front of a roaring fire in her drawing-room, when the door, suddenly opening, admitted her son.

'Ah, my dear Billy,' said she, rising ; 'I did not expect to see you so soon, and how have you enjoyed yourself ? Did you win ?'

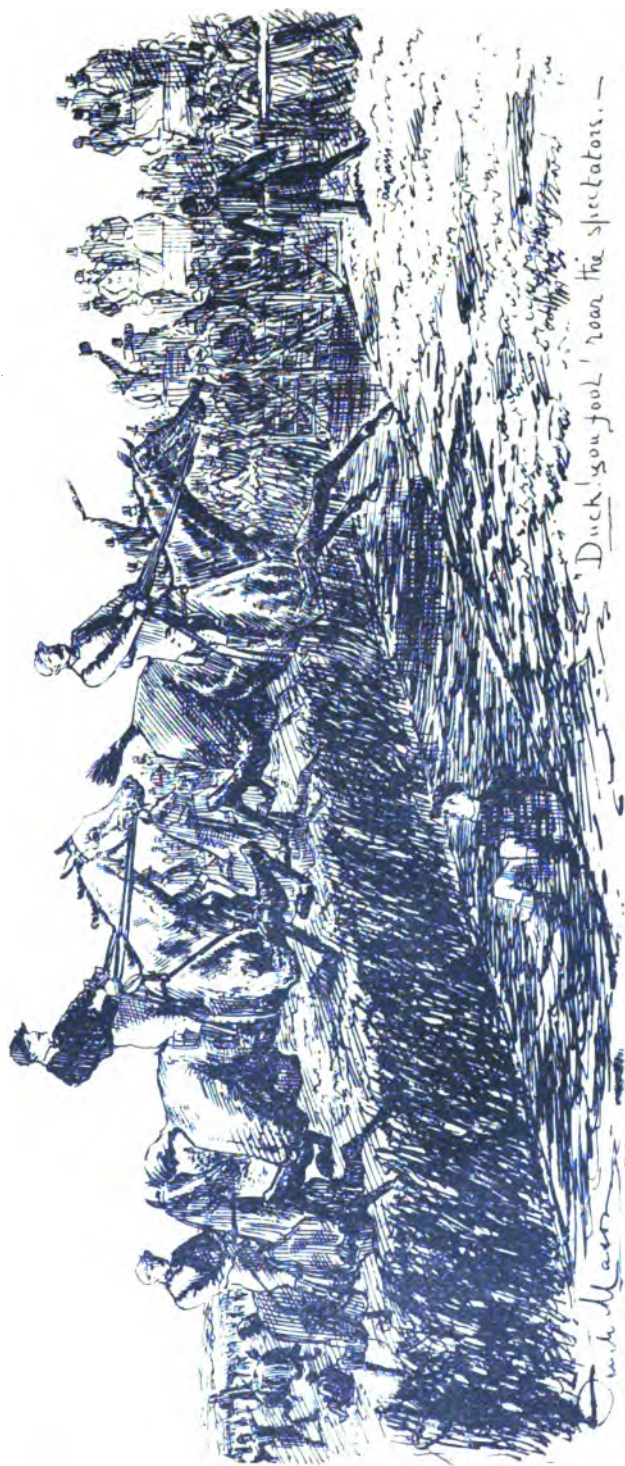
Billy answered not, but fell upon her bosom. Some moments elapsed before he spoke, and then he said in a hoarse voice, 'Mother, I—I've chucked up sport for good and all. I'll—I'll go into the Church as soon as you like. And, mother—'

'Yes, my beloved one.'

'Don't call me "Bill" any more, please.'

The delighted widow hugged her prodigal son to her. (She had ridden a splendid *waiting* race, had the Widow Browne.)

'Oh, William, William !' said she ; 'you *would* be a Sportsman !'



'Duck, you foul!' roars the spectators. —

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'LIKE AS WE LIE.'

'GOLF' DRINKING SONG.

By MAURICE NOEL.

BY the breezy ocean the links are keen,
 And the morning air is pure,
 As the snow-white balls on the velvet green
 Are driven so 'far and sure ;'
 'Not a yard between them,' we gaily cry,
 Like as we lie, boys ! Like us we lie !

A steady approach o'er a sandy brow,
 And a bunker yawning wide,
 They fly it—we follow—and see them now,
 On the green lie side by side,
 I study the putt with a careful eye,
 Like as we lie, boys ! Like as we lie !

Both at the bottom—a half in three ;
 It looks like a noble fight ;
 But *he* sends a raker from off the tee,
I circle away to the right,
 And down in the bunker, I heave a sigh,
 Like as we lie, boys ! Like as we lie !

But Fortune impartially treats us all,
 If we are content to wait ;
 At the following tee-shot, he tops his ball,
 And meets with a dismal fate ;
 I carry the hazard. 'Ho ! ho !' thinks I,
 'Like as we lie, boys ! Like as we lie !'

And so in the game, as we journey around,
 A picture of life is seen ;
 Sometimes a bit of good luck may be found,
 Sometimes a 'rub of the green,'
 And the end of it all will be, by and by,
 Like as we lie, boys ! Like as we lie !

But Golfers can banish dull thoughts away,
 The club and the ball are there,
 And shoulder to shoulder we'll start to play,
 And laugh in the face of care.
 We can take it together—you and I,
 Like as we lie, boys ! Like as we lie !

And now for a glorious toast prepare—

I'll give you an honoured name,

No handicap odds—let us all drink fair,

'The Royal and Ancient Game!'

So fill up your glasses, and fill them high,

Like as you lie, boys! Like as you lie!

A SACKFUL OF SALMON.

By E. L. A.



ONE of the pleasantest things about the doing of good deeds is the charming uncertainty of the manner of coin in which they will be repaid. Some little time ago I was able to obtain for a young Scotchman, whom we will call David, at his wits' end for a berth, a modest employment upon our great national shipping agency, and for this he was grateful to me past all reason and necessity. For my part I forgot not the man but the matter as lightly as it deserved, and there might have been the end of it. But three years afterwards, clambering up the green slopes of a wild and lonely foreland on the Scottish coast, I came, where the green verge looked down three hundred feet of sheer granite rock upon the sea that broke tumultuously at its base, upon a solitary white cottage standing in a wind-swept plot of potato garden, with a flag-staff in front and behind a single thread of telegraphic wire dipping over hill and dale as its only visible connexion with the great outer world beyond.

It was only then that it suddenly occurred to me that chance had brought myself and David together again, that this was the strange and lonely berth he had accepted with so much eagerness. Of course, I went in to see him, and when he had got over the natural astonishment attendant upon the arrival of his first visitor for eight weeks, he put such food and drink before me as his modest larder offered, and then fell to talk, though he was generally a silent man, with a volubility that I never heard equalled before. He told me, though it is not of his adventures I have to write, of the strange, wild life he lived on these lovely heights with twenty miles of bog and mountain between himself and the nearest village, of the grim loneliness of the December nights, and the terrible vacuity of the long

summer days ; he told me with extraordinary graphicness how in the time, ships had been wrecked under his very eyes, and how he had sat in his little cabin for hours watching the men drop from the masts into the sea one by one ; and then going out in the snow next morning he had found their dead bodies, ' more than he could bury in two days,' hard and stiff upon the rocks a stone's throw from his windows.

He told me one grim story which is worth repeating. During the previous winter there had been a bitter storm from the N.N.E. bringing with it a spell of arctic frost. During the gale a Spanish brig laden with iron ore went on the rocks a few hundred yards to the northward of his post, everybody on board being lost as it was subsequently proved. David only noticed the remains of the ship, owing to the extreme thickness of the weather, a week after she had struck, nevertheless he went out at once a little way along the coast through the deep snow, and in face of a frozen gale, that stung like the lash of a whip, to look for traces of the crew. Close by the wreck and half-way up the cliff, which was broken and shelving there, he saw two men sitting in their shirts under a rock with the snow piled up round them, and both of them frozen as hard as the stone itself against which they leant. A little further on, lying on an inaccessible beach, there was another man thrown up above high water mark, but not a sign of any living survivor anywhere. He went out again in the afternoon and hunted till dusk without result, and then just after the evening had fallen and a watery glimpse of moon was putting a strange uncanny life into the shadows on the lonely snow-fields, and the white dust that went swirling across the open filled every dark hollow with shifting spectral forms, he came back to his own potato plot and followed the wall along towards the gate. Just a pace or two before he got to it, there was an old pit whence soil had once been dug, a few yards wide and generally full of water, that had to be crossed by a narrow slippery plank.

The water at the bottom was now ice, black and smooth, and my companion did not wonder that it had turned solid in a few days, for his own teeth were chattering in his head, and the sting of the wind as it came howling out of the north, laden with frost, and a fine frozen rain that bit every exposed place like snipe shot, was an experience to be remembered. He had half crossed that hole when something unexpected caught his eye in the middle of the snow-ribbed ice. He got down to look at it

more nearly, but could not make it out as it lay under the glaze of the ice. The thing was hazy and blurred, and the salt tears dimmed the signalman's eyes, so down he went upon his knees, and wiping the surface clear with his coat-cuff, waited for a gleam of moonlight, and then screening his face with both hands, put it close within an inch or so of the frozen water, and stared below. But it was not a long stare! Before he had looked a moment, he started to his feet and staggered back against the plank, for there—not a foot from his face, staring back at him with great terror-stricken eyes, and mouth wide open, and black hair frayed out just as it had floated when, weak and fainting, the owner had tumbled in a week before was another face—the face of a dark-bearded, swarthy Southern seaman. When David got his senses again, he said he half persuaded himself it was only his own reflection he had seen. And yet that could not be, for there was the 'thing' still shimmering in the ghostly winter twilight, so the Scotchman, plucking up all his courage and approaching once more, looked down closely and saw below him, past all doubt, and frozen solid into the ice, the body of a Spaniard from the wreck hideously contorted in its death struggles, while his face, which was nearest to the surface, frowned up at him with a stony stare, dreadful to look at in its wide-eyed agony.

It was as grim a neighbour as any one could have at their garden gate on a December evening, and David went home to his solitary supper, and tried to make up his mind not to think about it. However, that was easier said than done. That Spaniard haunted him worse and worse every hour. Every time the wind came sweeping up the path and tried his door, his heart stood still, and every time the withered honeysuckle strands outside scraped and tapped against his window panes like fingers, he stared from his chair—in fact, he owned to me without shame that he passed a wretched night, and with the first streak of morning he had determined to dig the Spaniard out at all hazards. It was a task prompted by his desperation. He had only indifferent tools, and was not himself a bulky man. Though he got to work at seven, by the time the afternoon began to merge into evening, he had only chipped out the Spaniard's head, and there he was still up to his neck in ice, his bare, frozen face, blue and white in the reflections of the snow, more dreadful and emphatic than ever! Well, the man went home and spent another evening and night brooding over the

day's accomplishment. By dawn he was up and out with an old lantern for another round of his horrible work, but early as he was, he found a party of crows had been there before him and had made ghastly havoc with the uncovered head. David screwed up his courage and went at it again in a cruel wind, and against the machinations of a frost that made the ice he chipped at like sheet steel, and by night he had only got one arm of the dead man bare to the elbow.

In fact, to make a long story short, David told me how he sweated and chopped and chipped day and night round that horrible thing under the spell of an irresistible fascination, and then, when his strength was failing, and he had worked himself almost into a nervous fever, a thaw came—there is rarely a good crisis to a true tale!—and in half-a-dozen hours the west wind had done what my friend had failed to do in seven long days—it had thawed the Spaniard out and left him floating in the peat hole, so that it was easy enough for David, who had toiled so long, to haul the body up a shelving bank, drag it down to the cliff, and at last, with infinite relief, bury it in a crevice there.

'At first I thought I should go mad, sir, with the loneliness of it,' he said to me; 'and then I thought I should only die! But I held on, and now I have come to like it, and nothing frightens me but the face of a man. From eight to eight every day of the year I am here, sir, at this little window taking down the flag numbers of the ships that go by yonder, one by one, in endless, inaccessible processions, and sending those numbers on through yonder wire to the head offices in London. It is monotonous work, sir, but better than doing nothing, and in between times when there is an on-shore gale, or the sea fog hangs round this cabin like a great wet sheet, I amuse myself in many little ways.' Thereon he showed me some very clever cases of stuffed birds he had set up, and a shelfful of the quaintest possible carvings made from curious bits of driftwood, and the finely polished bones of a cow whose skeleton he had found in the bog near his cottage. Another solace of his captivity was his garden, though, as he said, the potatoes and his salt-bronzed cabbages in it had almost to be held down while they grew, the plot was so wind-swept. Yet another amusement he had was fishing—almost always after nightfall—and I soon found that incessant practice and the keen observation which such as my companion alone are able to give, had made him another

Hiawatha for close communion and comprehension of the ways of all those birds and fishes of the cliffs and gullies which he himself called (though he had probably never read Longfellow), 'his chickens.' In fact, as I sat there in his little room as the afternoon drew into evening, listening to his unlearned but extraordinarily interesting talk, I began to think I knew as much about the chattering colonies of the seafowl on the ledges of the precipices as the brown kestrels whose gliding shadows hush for a moment the clamour of their domesticity; and as much about sea-bream and conger-spawn and herring-fry as the grey seals who had their lodging-places in the clefts of the cliffs below.

What he said about the salmon especially interested me. I knew they migrated round these shores, and I had helped only a day or two before to lift some stake nets to the southward, thus obtaining practical demonstration of the abundant numbers in which these lordly fish coast along the headlands at certain seasons of the year; but when David presently told me that salmon, almost beyond the avarice of the most enthusiastic amateur angler were to be caught on such a moonlight evening as that which was closing round us at the very foot of the cliffs, I was both astonished and charmed, and gladly accepted the Scotchman's offer—made, I could see, as some return for past kindness—to show me where and how he had these miraculous draughts.

We waited until it was quite dark, and then, just as a broad yellow moon was rising huge and golden out of the black further edge of the sea, we set out with a rod apiece, a landing-gaff, a lantern, a fly-book, and an empty sack! Every part of our outfit was gigantic. The rods were two tapering six-foot lengths of solid cane spliced in the middle, ringed moreover with things like napkin rings, and terminated by a miniature brass pulley. The winches they carried, the productions of a distant carpenter, were as big as cheese plates, with a handle like the handle of a coffee-mill, while the line upon them was extremely strong hempen twine, dyed or rather tanned by fisherman's tan, to a deep mahogany colour. The sack was voluminous and suggestive enough to make the ordinary angler of modest pretensions blush; while lastly the 'fly-book' was an empty cocoa-box, strapped on to my guide's back like a soldier's haversack, and emitting as he scrambled down the rough path, an unexpected rattling sound as though it were full of something far more

substantial than any flies commonly tied for the beguiling of a discriminating fish.

The night was dark on top of the cliff, and we stumbled along as best we could over the narrow zigzag path until we came to the long smooth incline of a gorge sloping obliquely down to the sea and to the right of the main headland. Here the moonlight and a gentle sea-breeze met us together, and following a sheep-track through the stunted fern and pale knot-grass that glistened in the shine like steel wire, we slowly and cautiously descended the hill-side, using the butts of our rods as alpenstocks, and looking, I suppose, very like a pair of amateur smugglers going to recover from some secret cave a string of contraband brandy casks. A couple of hundred feet, quite at the bottom of the slope we turned back to the left, thence climbing over a saw-backed ridge of bare stone, we got down at last to the foot of the great walls of rock that towered fantastic and sombre in the mellow light in spire and pinnacle above us like the outline of some giant cathedral.

'Now, sir, go carefully ; don't look about, but keep your eyes on the path straight ahead, for it is a bit narrow here,' said David, and forthwith he led me across a rocky terrace, over a chasm which I had to jump with the knowledge that the sea was churning into foam thirty feet down below, the opposite edge of the crevice in the dark being a complete matter of speculation, and so finally along a gradually sloping shelf in the face of the rock wall not two feet wide in places, but gradually broadening out until it ended in a flat of granite in densest shadow, the opposite edge of which dipped away to a broad, strangely shining pool lying gently heaving with the rise and fall of the sea outside under a natural portico of rock.

Everywhere but just where we stood that basin was roofed and hemmed in by inky black barriers of stone, and yet as I have said, the water itself was brilliantly lit. I stood and gazed in astonished perplexity as that wonderful liquid blue floor lifted and sank at my feet, and gleamed and glistened with a beautiful sepulchral light in the utter darkness around, and it was only after a minute or two that I guessed whence the illumination came, and saw that the pool was connected with the sea on the moonlit side by a couple of open archways deep under water, through which the tide and the light eddied in together.

Long knowledge or possibly the philosophy of his race had

made my friend indifferent to the sight, and while I stood gazing delightedly at it he was busy over the rods, threading the hemp through the gigantic rings, setting the cheese-plate winches straight in their fastenings, and when all was ready adding a small lead weight to the bottom of each line, and finally selecting and tying on after the fashion of a paternoster, two of the most extraordinary flies that have ever come within the range of my salmon-fishing experiences. They were tied on ordinary galvanised cod-hooks, and consisted solely of a bunch of white gull feathers nearly as large as a hen's egg with two metallic green cormorant plumes for 'wings.' What the salmon were to take them for I did not know, but then no one knows what salmon recognise in any of the marvellous concoctions of coloured wool and tinsel of the tackle shops, and as these barbaric flies of ours proved extraordinarily successful, we did not trouble about the exact source of their inspiration.

By the time my eyes were accustomed to the dim blue light, the Scotchman was ready; and putting the yellow gleaming lantern out of sight behind a rock, he asked me to stand still and watch him make the first few throws. He approached the dim brink of the pool, and then steadying himself for a minute, suddenly slung the lead right over to the far edge and let it sink into the blue depth.

As soon as he felt it had touched the bottom he began to draw the line upwards and inwards, giving as he did so a peculiar tremor to the rod, which I afterwards found was half the secret of his success. Well, the first time nothing happened, the flies came back wet and dripping to land, and were spun out again into the darkness only to return unappreciated to our feet from a second voyage. The third time I distinctly saw them for a second wavering upwards across the great underwater portal, and I no longer wondered at their seductiveness, for anything more like a young flat fish in difficulties or a youthful herring frolicking about in the moonlight it would be impossible to conceive.

I had hardly thought this to myself when something shadowy and spectral swept across the inlet as the shadow of a bird sweeps across a sunny wall, and in an instant one of the flies had gone, and my friend's rod I knew was bending like a willow twig. He had hooked his fish this cast, and there we could see it deep down in the clear water wallowing and plunging like a smudge of silver as the moon flashed and

glittered on its body. Nothing could have held a salmon in such narrow quarters, save the heavy line which David dealt out grudgingly inch by inch, but that line and strong arm were too much for the big fish. For several minutes the blue night pool was full of shooting silver comets as he rushed here and there; then presently we had him on top, and wherever his mad plungings and flounderings broke the surface he was lost for a moment in a black surf of wave and splashes. Then again down he went and made straight for the portal, but David fairly turned him over on his back with the help of that strong gear of his, and to and fro, whirling, and spinning, and rushing round in bewildering circles the salmon went. It was like playing 'a mad moon in a blue sky upside down' my companion suggested, and it was fully ten minutes before the rushes became shorter, the plunges into the depth more ineffective, until at last I got a chance with the gaff (which was a shark-hook on an eight-foot pole), and at the second try struck and safely dragged back on to the rocks as clean and plump a fifteen-pound salmon as any fisherman could wish for.

We admired him by lantern light for a minute or two, and then slipped him head first into the sack, after which I took my rod and had a try. But nothing could I do until I mastered that particular tremor of the line which gave to the 'flies' such a marvellously natural appearance. Grey, mysterious shadows, indeed, came out of the profound, and smelt my baits as they swung across the light suspiciously, but none would touch them until after half-a-dozen lessons I had caught the trick, and then I got my first fish, and after nearly losing him owing to an over-liberality with the line brought him safe to basket, or rather to bag. Then David got two small fish in quick succession, and in between the fierce but brief combats with the apparently inexhaustible resources of that hole, he told me how he found it, and that no amount of fishing or disturbance affected its productiveness upon a favourable night. My own idea was that the fish closely skirting the headland and finding deep water right up to the foot of the cliffs, might float in at one archway and out at the other, as the long lines of their migration drifted them up the shore. But the Scotchman held the place was just a caravansary, a house of call where the fish came in to sleep and bask in the moonlight out of the wash of the water. As far as he knew, he said, there was no other place like it round the point, and all the time he talked he was getting rushes and

now and then landing a fish with marvellous ease and rapidity, such as elsewhere one would have to toil half a day for.

It was a stirring and exciting episode while it lasted, with those splendid great crags rising above us, tier after tier and pinnacle upon pinnacle, until their uppermost points seemed touching the stars, and the strange melancholy night-talk of the sea-fowl upon their ledges coming to us dim and elfin-like in the silence. As the night wore on the full moon brought out, against the ebony shadows behind, every fret and weather-worn tracery of that tremendous cliff like an ivory carving, and down below the loons were calling to each other out in the open, the seals purring over their supper far away upon the sand-flats of the bay, and the tide, as black as ink in the shadows, draping the low rocks as it rose and fell with a glowing drapery of phosphorescence, set with the stars of minute but unnumbered and brightly glittering medusæ.

We got our sackful of salmon, an honest sackful, full up to the topmost hem, and when the tide had failed us and sport for the night was over we left it upon a safe ledge to be called for by some friendly fisherman in the morning, with a white handkerchief tied over the mouth to scare the hooded crows who would be sure to scent the spoil at daylight, and then, scrambling back as we had come, we had a pipe and some whiskey, and finally turned in upon the hard bunks of David's cottage to glorious dreams in which mermaids, and salmon, and medusæ, and deep-sea caves were all hopelessly mixed up together in a delightful medley.

NOTES ON NOVELTIES.



REAMLAND is once more the subject of Mr. A. C. Havell's humorous pencil, and, having already depicted in the two well-known coloured prints the slumbering idiosyncrasies and aberrations of The Fox-Hunter and Racing Man, he now presents us with his amusing and fantastic ideas of those of the Soldier, under the title of '*A Bivouac Vision*,' and this will be found to be a worthy centrepiece to the above-mentioned pair.

Enfolded in his blankets and more or less comfortably prone upon the bare earth, with head pillowed on his arms, is seen the

raison d'être of this alternately engrossing and mirth-provoking picture in the form of a young officer, floating above whom appears a female form of diaphanous and spiritual appearance, offering him the laurel crown. In the foreground is a smouldering watch-fire, the smoke from which permeates the entire picture, parting at intervals to display a real or whimsical view of sport, in the kaleidoscopic manner of dreams; thus are represented Indian jungle scenes and cricket at Lord's, the African Camel Corps engaged with their sable opponents, and then a hunting and shooting scene, pig-sticking, steeple-chasing, ostrich and kangaroo racing, and golfing. Then are change-fully depicted the iron-clad railway car, the bicycle rifle corps, football, and ladies playing polo. Yachting and deer-stalking incidents are also in evidence; whilst in the top centre of the picture sails a captive military balloon. Other funny conceits complete the picture. As its contemplation must inevitably produce smiles, not to say laughter, it is surely something with which a soldier and a sportsman will be glad to live. Messrs. Fores, 41 Piccadilly, are the publishers.

The same firm are the publishers of a novel design for holding the usual postage card announcement of forthcoming *Hunting Meets*. This, too, is from a painting by Mr. A. C. Havell, and is amusingly decorative as well as useful. On one side of the rustic receptacle for the card, stands Mr. Reynard, booted, spurred, and glowing in a fresh pink—politely saluting with upraised cap a sturdy and somewhat surprised-looking foxhound on the opposite side; he, too, is habited in a workmanlike hunting costume, and has politely removed his cap in acknowledgement of the other's salutation. The idea of hunting meets is further carried out by the meeting of two sportmen in a brook, presumably in consequence of cannoning one another, as mutual recriminations appear to be taking place; and another sketch shows an unfortunate sportsman being ignobly spilled at the moment he has met with two fair equestrians. In the distance is seen a meet of hounds with their usual field of hunting men. Fitted in an appropriate frame, it forms a pleasing adjunct to the mantelpiece or sideboard of a hunting box.

Thorley's (of 'food for cattle' celebrity) have just issued their *Illustrated Farmers' Almanack and Diary for 1895*. It con-

tains as usual an immense amount of miscellaneous information interesting alike to the agriculturist and country gentleman.

It will interest golfers to learn that the well-known firm of W. and G. Ashford, of Birmingham, have introduced a new Club, which they call a 'skibbie,' and is in fact a driver, for which they claim the very important advantage that it is practically unbreakable; this will be appreciated by those who, after many trials, have succeeded in getting a perfectly-fitting club.

The Jaeger Stable Exhibition, Knightsbridge, should be visited by all who are owners, or otherwise connected with horses, for there they will see things useful, novel, and interesting in the way of horse clothing.

A model of a horse (said to be that well-known steeplechaser The Lamb) is shown, on which is displayed a patent 'Truefit' suit made of the Jaeger pure wool undyed fleece; this appears to be (as it is claimed) very durable, and it is certainly soft, light, and warm, and as it engenders a feeling of comfort in the beholder, so doubtless it will do the same in the living wearer. The patent fittings thereunto pertaining are ingenious and handsome.

There is also a new patent saddle with removable pannels and Jaeger stuffing, which is calculated to prevent sore backs. Also a soft and flexible 'ribbon rein' which will neither blister the hands or soil the gloves.

A novelty for 1895 is *Finch Mason's Sporting Annual* (a hardy one, we trust), which will make its first appearance this month, with a portrait of Mr. Arthur Yates, eight coloured engravings, and contributions by such well-known writers as Major Arthur Griffiths, 'Orange Blossom,' Nathaniel Gubbins, 'Rockwood,' Maurice Noel, &c. It should prove of decided interest to sportsmen in general. Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, & Co. are the publishers.

The attraction of London to-day is *The Turquoise Window in Bond Street* (Streeter's). Alluring as it has ever been, it has now an added charm for ladies and gentlemen of sporting proclivities in the shape of charming brooches and scarf-pins modelled in diamonds, gold and enamel. Their beauties must be seen to be appreciated. Last year's speciality was the Chrysoprase.



1

Racing. ❖

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Plate 1.—EPSOM.

THE PADDOCK.

Plate 2.—SANDOWN.

THE PRELIMINARY CANTER.

Plate 3.—DONCASTER.

AT THE POST.

5

Plate 4.—ASCOT.

THE START.

Plate 5.—NEWMARKET.

THE RACE.



6

Plate 6.—GOODWOOD.

THE FINISH.





¹ Hunting.

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PLATE 2.—

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PLATE 3.—

"Hold hard, Gentlemen!"

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PLATE 2.—KEMPTON.
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PLATE 3.—SANDOWN.
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